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To close out our pet issue, we recount the story of Sgt. Stubby, the fiercest four-legged soldier in World War I.

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Cover design: Alyson Bowman; photo by Mara Lavitt at Prime 16 in New Haven.

This page: (top) Louis' Lunch; photo by Mike Franzman; (above) Sgt. Stubby; photo courtesy of Library of Congress.



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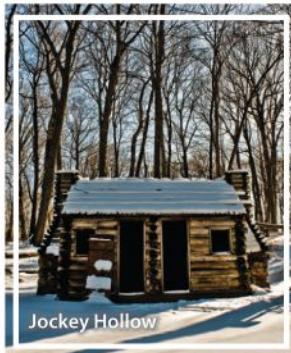
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“Those who stand for nothing fall for anything.” — Alexander Hamilton



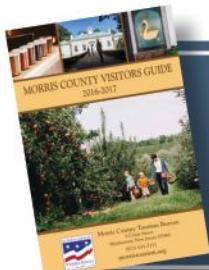
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The Morris County Tourism Bureau received funding through a grant from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel & Tourism. www.visitnj.org

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| credit & collections | 877-396-8937

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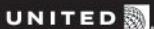
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COUNCIL Connecticut Magazine® (ISSN 0889-7670), a property of Digital First Media, 101 W. Colfax Ave., 11th Floor, Denver, CO 80202-5177, is published monthly by Connecticut Magazine at 100 Gando Drive, New Haven, CT 06513. Periodicals postage paid at New Haven, Connecticut, and at additional mailing offices. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription rates: One year \$19.97, two years \$34.97, three years \$39.97 in Connecticut; out-of-state residents add \$5/yr. **POSTMASTER:** Send changes of address to Connecticut Magazine Subscription Services, P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834.

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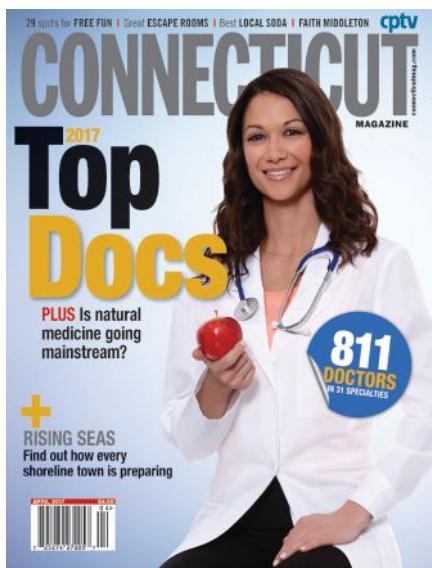
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A Happy Newcomer

I've just received the "Top Docs" issue and noticed that a previous issue had "30 Hidden Gems," of which I'm very much interested in. It really appeals to me as I'm an avid hiker and explorer. I'm new to your publication. However, I just love it!

Geneva Renegar
Waterford

'Rising Seas' Climate Alarmism

I got a kick out of the inconsistencies in the article on "Rising Seas" in the April issue. The rise per year of 2.58 millimeters was correct, but the predictions of a rise of 1 foot to 6 feet are laughable. At the present rate, sea level would rise 8.5 inches by 2100, (not too far from 1 foot), but to reach 6 feet, it would have to rise more than 8 times as fast starting tomorrow. There is no indication that this will happen, and I find these scare tactics deplorable. This is an all-too-frequent tactic by the climate alarmists.

James Macdonald
South Windsor

Editor's note: The paragraph at issue says, "According to DEEP [the state Department of Energy and Environmental

Protection], Connecticut's shoreline is rising by 2.58 millimeters a year, but many expect that rate to increase, though the rate at which it will increase is unclear."

The Fate of Silver Sands

I was really taken aback about the state saying they were going to start building bathhouses, etc., at Silver Sands in Milford, which was mentioned in your "Free Connecticut" feature in the April issue. I grew up on East Broadway a few blocks down from there. In 1955 when I was young, the state made all of us move out and sell our houses to them because they were going to build a "state park." They tore down our houses, ripped up the pavement so you can't even find where your street was and then ran out of money and did nothing. For over 60 years, it has been a wasteland. NOW they want to do it? Give me a break. But it sounds like they are hedging again. History does repeat itself!

Louise Baker
Newtown

Quiet Corner Renaissance

As a long-time subscriber who lives in the semi-rural Quiet Corner of Connecticut, I suggest that you adjust your tabulation process for the "Readers' Choice Awards" for area population for Best Restaurants. Our lovely Quiet Corner is undergoing a Quiet Renaissance, and it would serve your readers well to help spread the news about area gems such as Putnam's First Fridays and Fire & Ice celebrations, the great microbrews like Machu Picchu made by Black Pond Brewery in Killingly, the terrific live music, food and drinks at The Stomping Ground and mouth-watering barbecue at the Black Dog Bar and Grill, both in Putnam, not to mention the breath-taking views along the cliffs at Old Furnace State Park in Killingly. I was delighted to see your recent mentions of The Bradley Playhouse and the restaurants Roots Down and Heirloom Foods, but there's much more to enjoy. When our delights can compete against those of Litchfield, Hartford and New Haven counties on equal terms, I know they can hold their own.

Robin Lofquist
Danielson

Editor's note: Roots Down in Woodstock closed earlier this year.

Join the conversation: Follow us on Twitter @connecticutmag and on our Facebook page

Corrections: Chef Kurt Ramborger is a third-generation Irish-American. An article in the April issue about Ramborger competing in the American School for the Deaf's Iron Deaf Chef Culinary Cook-off incorrectly stated he is a native of Ireland. The escape room pictured in the April story "The Great Escapes" was of Complexity: A Puzzling Adventure in Farmington, not Adventure Rooms of Middletown as stated in the caption.

My Favorites

In the house where I grew up, we always had some combination of dogs and cats. When I was very young, we rescued two dogs, a dachshund and a Maltese. Both were wasting away with health issues in a pet store after having come from puppy mills. The dachshund, Joey, had mange which caused him to lose most of his fur. Max, the Maltese, was deaf. As "undesirable" dogs, both were about to be euthanized.



So we took them in. We treated Joey's skin problem, and his fur eventually grew back. Both he and Max immediately became a part of the family we couldn't imagine living without. But their experiences before they came to us left scars — both physical and psychological — that remained for the rest of their lives. Even so, there's not a doubt in my mind they lived happy lives. And there's no doubt they made our lives happier, too.

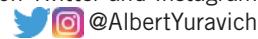
I know there are plenty of folks out there who feel similarly about their pets, and animals in general. If you're one of them, be sure to check out "Our Furry Friends" (page 35), in which we examine the groundbreaking work being done at Yale's Canine Cognition Center, the efforts of a cat-rescue group, the life of a country vet, and a Broadway animal trainer's tips on finding the right puppy for you. And for a bonus animal story, turn to Erik Ofgang's Connecticut Files on page 80 for the incredible true story of Sgt. Stubby, a legend of World War I.

I also have a soft spot for burgers, which is why it was a genuine pleasure to explore our state's best burger joints. Check out our list of 20 places — with everything from beef and chicken to ahi tuna and portobello — starting on page 42.

After reading about amazing animals and delicious burgers, maybe, just maybe, you'll think about helping an animal in need. Or just have a burger.

Albert Yuravich

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Sanctuary Connecticut

AS NATIONAL IMMIGRATION BATTLE RAGES,
EDUCATION, POLICING FORM FRONT LINES HERE

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

For several weeks after she crossed the U.S.-Mexico border, 13-year-old Hazel Mencos was detained near McAllen, Texas. She says she is still disturbed by what she saw on her two-month trip north from her hometown of Escuintla in Guatemala, through Mexico and into the U.S., and was traumatized by what she experienced in the detention center. Mencos says she spent seven days in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention facility, eating bad food and sleeping in the cold. ICE agents gave her only an aluminum foil blanket for warmth, and verbally abused her, she says. "Why are you here? This is my country," she recalls the agents saying. After that, Mencos was transferred to ICE-maintained housing, where she saw a psychologist. She eventually reunited with her family in New Haven, who had reached the U.S. before Mencos.

Mencos, now 16 and a sophomore at Wilbur Cross High School, has been living in the city for three years. She would like to go on to college after she graduates, but is worried she won't be able to afford it. She also fears that her efforts to become a citizen will be derailed.

After fleeing the chaos of Central

America, Mencos and thousands like her have waded into what has, in recent months, become one of the most controversial topics in American political life, both in Washington and here at home. President Trump was elected to office partly on a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment, promising to increase enforcement by building a wall on the southern border and deporting undocumented immigrants. At the same time, the undocumented community nationally, including in Connecticut, is organizing itself to resist what it sees as potential attacks. So-called "sanctuary cities," such as Hartford, New Haven, Middletown and Windham, are at the center of the debate. These are where, in basic terms, police don't enforce immigration laws and may refuse to cooperate with federal immigration authorities.

The dispute's two flashpoints are education and policing.

EDUCATION

Mencos, and many others in similar circumstances, stand to benefit from a pair of bills working their way through the state legislature. One in the Senate and the other in the House, the bills would allow undocumented immigrants to qualify for

tuition assistance at the state's colleges and universities. The Senate version of the bill has cleared all the necessary hurdles and could be called to a vote on the floor sometime in May. If passed into law, the bill would add to a collection of policies that has made Connecticut one of the more open states for undocumented immigrants in recent years. Advocates say the bills, versions of which have been brought up in previous legislative sessions, would allow undocumented students to access funds at public institutions that they have already paid into through tuition.

Connecticut Students for a Dream has been at the forefront of the lobby effort in Hartford, organizing a blitz of rallies and sit-ins at the Capitol. While the Senate passed a similar bill last year, it was never taken up in the House, and this year the Senate is split between the Democrats and the Republicans, making the bill's chances more uncertain. During an advocate "teach-in" event at the Capitol in March, Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr., D-Guilford, was on hand to lend his support to the bill. "Without this change ... immigrant students, undocumented students, who are attending UConn, for example, can't avail themselves of this financial aid which they all pay into. So I think it's just an issue of fairness," he said.

Hazel Mencos, 16, of New Haven and a student at Wilbur Cross High School, was born in Guatemala and came to the U.S. when she was 13.

PHOTO BY PETER HVIZDAK



The effort is not without its detractors. Freshman Rep. Kevin Skulczyck, R-Griswold, a former corrections officer, has put forward a pair of bills that go head to head with existing and proposed sanctuary-style policies. One would cut off state funding for any institution of higher education that has adopted policies "akin to those adopted by sanctuary cities." While the bill did not make it out of the House higher education committee, Skulczyck is hoping the language of the bill can be incorporated into other legislation.

Mark Ojakian, the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system, backs the bills that would allow tuition assistance for undocumented immigrants, adding that the support for the bills in the state legislature is "better than it's ever been."

Ojakian has not gone as far as designating the universities and colleges under his supervision as sanctuary campuses. "We're not going to break the law," he says, but has established a protocol. If an immigration agent comes onto a campus, "the agent needs to be referred to the president [of the college or university], and we want to see the warrant or the court order to make sure that the scope is in line with what they're there to do, and then we will act accordingly," he says.

POLICING

The protocol at state colleges and universities involves policing, which has been another battlefield in the national and state immigration political landscape. While police departments in several cities across the state have declared that they will not actively cooperate with ICE officials, nor inquire about immigration status in the course of routine policing, no policy exists at the state level. Rep. Edwin Vargas, D-Hartford, has proposed a bill that would extend similar policing policies to the state police. (A state police spokesman declined to comment on pending legislation.)

Skulczyck's second bill proposes to cut off funding for municipalities that adopt sanctuary policies, cities such as Hartford, New Haven and Middletown. Skulczyck concedes that some might view the bill as an extreme measure, but he says it irks him that these cities are violating federal law. Because of President Trump's threat to cut off federal funding for sanctuary cities and step up immigration enforcement, Skulczyck says communities such as his in the 45th District, which includes Griswold, Sterling, Plainfield, Voluntown and Lisbon, also stand to be hurt by the secondary effect of cuts to municipal aid. "We would then be subject to being affected once again by municipal leaders who choose to be

defiant and wave that flag of sanctuary-city policy," he says. While several police chiefs in the state have supported the adoption of sanctuary policies, Skulczyck says the policies have less support from police officers. "Most of the rank-and-file officers that I speak to across the state, they want to enforce the law. Law-enforcement professionals aren't in the business to ignore federal or state laws," he says.

Vargas disagrees. "There's nothing in any of these bills that have been passed — whether it's the [undocumented students] getting in-state tuition, whether it's the drive-only license, whether it's the sanctuary ordinance passed by [Windham], New Haven and Hartford — none of these things either attempt to interfere with ICE or attempt to contravene any federal laws," he says. Tens of thousands of undocumented immigrants in Connecticut either hold or have applied for "drive-only" licenses, potentially giving ICE a database to find the immigrants.

Mencos is unapologetic about being in the U.S. Asked what she would say to someone concerned about the presence of the undocumented, she says, through an interpreter, "I would tell them they have to walk in our shoes because anyone of our skin gives something to the state or the country."

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PHOTO BY CHELE MODICA

Salt Therapy

SALTANA CAVE IN RIDGEFIELD OFFERS ESCAPE FROM STRESS WITH SIMULATED SALT CAVE

BY ERIK OFGANG

We take off our shoes and we're led into the "cave."

Leaving the normalcy of a waiting room at Saltana Cave in Ridgefield, we walk through a door into a dark otherworld. Dim lights on the ceiling twinkle like tiny stars, partially illuminating a room that looks like a set piece from a 1980s fantasy epic.

The ground is basically a sand box of salt that we can feel shifting under our feet (white socks are mandatory) as we make our way in. Against the back wall there is a fireplace made of pink brick and stone that glows, adding more light. I'll learn later that the room, which is about the size of an average living room, contains close to 12,000 pounds of salt. In addition to the salt on the floor, the substance is present in the walls and the ceiling and is even pumped into the air during sessions.

Our group consists of myself and four other participants who've signed on randomly for the 11 a.m. session on a Tuesday. Inside the room, several gravity chairs are set up. We take our seats and lean back, facing the ceiling like astronauts before liftoff.

After leading us in, Saltana Cave owner Anna Pogoda leaves, closing the

door behind her. A recorded voice-over narration begins to explain the history of salt caves and the theories behind salt therapy, also known as halotherapy.

The concept of salt caves as therapy began, we learn, in the mid-1800s when a Polish doctor noticed the low incidence of respiratory conditions in those who worked inside salt mines, and posited that the salt particles in the air kept the miners healthy. Soon afterward, a health spa opened within the salt mine. During World War II, a German doctor made similar observations about the improved health of patients who hid in salt caves during bombing raids. A spa was later opened at a German salt mine.

In the 1980s, the treatment was liberated from the subterranean lairs of actual caves when a process for recreating the climate of salt caves in a regular room was developed. Simulated salt caves became popular in various parts of Europe and have started making their way to the U.S. in recent years.

In 2013, Saltana Cave became Connecticut's first salt cave. Others have since opened, including Salt of the Earth Spa in Woodbury and Spa Soli in West Hartford.

Pogoda says salt sessions "boost your immune system, clearing away the debris of daily life, [and] also improve breathing

quality for people with chronic lung conditions such as asthma or bronchitis."

Research into the effects of salt therapy is limited, but proponents swear by the treatments. At Saltana Cave, 45-minute sessions cost \$40. Reservations are required.

About six years ago, Pogoda and her 8-year-old daughter, who has asthma, visited Poland and experienced several sessions in a simulated salt cave. "After experiencing 10 consecutive sessions, I noticed that her asthma symptoms decreased," Pogoda says.

This inspired Pogoda to do more research and, ultimately, open Saltana Cave.

The salt in the simulated cave generates negative ions, molecules that are believed to have positive effects on our mood, stress levels and overall energy. Negative ions are found in abundance at beaches, near waterfalls and on mountains, but a salt-therapy session has those places beat, says Pogoda. "One 45-minute salt session is an equivalent to a three-day beach vacation as far as negative ions and salt," she says.

During our session, as the negative ions fill the air and I start to acclimate to the salt-filled atmosphere, I get antsy.

Before we entered the room we were told we couldn't bring in our phones. Without any reading material, I worry

the session will be tedious. Forty-five minutes can be an eternity. Just ask anyone who's ever driven during rush hour on I-95, or had to wait for a dentist's appointment. As someone who does not nap or meditate, both recommended activities to engage in during the session, I'm left staring into the darkness wishing for the company of a good book.

But, those negative ions seem to have an effect, because before too long, my negative thoughts are gone, and I'm starting to relax. After what seems like 20-25 minutes, Pogoda re-enters the room, letting us know the session is over. Everyone in my group comments on how fast time seemed to pass.

It is a relaxing and unusual way to spend a morning. If I were to go back, I'd want to absorb the beach vibes of the salt particles and negative ions with the help of a good book and cup of coffee, or better yet, a margarita with, of course, salt on the rim.

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the reading room

BY ERIK OFGANG

THE COMPASSIONATE ACHIEVER: HOW HELPING OTHERS FUELS SUCCESS

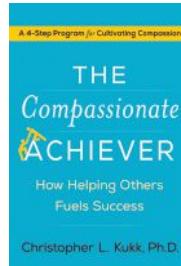
By Christopher L. Kukk, Ph.D.

Harper Collins

2017, 256 pages

Nice guys (or gals) finish last is a saying Christopher L. Kukk vehemently disagrees with. In his new book, Kukk argues that compassion — "recognizing a problem or caring about another's

pain and making a commitment to help" — is one of the essential secrets to success. A former Army intelligence officer, Kukk is a professor of political science at Western Connecticut State University, where he is also the founding director of the Center for Compassion, Creativity and Innovation. In his book he draws on his personal experience as well as a host of recent scientific studies, convincingly making the case that "Whether you are trying to get a promotion, reach a financial milestone, complete a degree, or help a child learn to read, compassion will help you to accomplish your goal more efficiently and effectively."



INCENDIARY: THE PSYCHIATRIST, THE MAD BOMBER, AND THE INVENTION OF CRIMINAL PROFILING

By Michael Cannell

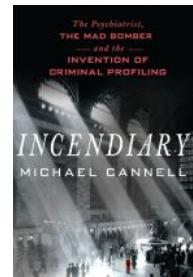
Minotaur Books

2017, 302 pages

Waterbury's George

Metesky, aka "The Mad Bomber," terrorized New York City for more than a decade and a half in the 1940s and 1950s with a series of bombs placed in public places. His stranger-than-fiction story has long

fascinated students of Connecticut and criminal history. Charles Monagan, former editor of this magazine, wrote a musical about Metesky called *Mad Bomber*, which opened in Waterbury in 2011. Ray Bendici, also a former editor at this magazine, included a chapter about the criminal in his 2012 book *Speaking Ill of the Dead: Jerks in Connecticut History*. Michael Cannell's new book is the latest, and probably most comprehensive, work to delve into the story of Metesky and his crimes. Cannell is a veteran journalist and author who has written for *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, and *Incendiary* is a bona fide page-turner that gives loads of insight into early psychological profiling.



THE RIDGEFIELD PLAYHOUSE

MAY

9 The Tenors



17 Under The Streetlamp

Featuring cast members of Broadway's *Jersey Boys*!



18 Paul Anka

Celebrating 60 Years of Hits
- His Way



21 Tony Award Winner

Ben Vereen



27 Ottmar Liebert and
Luna Negra



JUNE

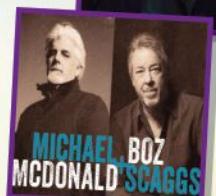
11 Ramsey Lewis

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JUNE

27 The Gipsy Kings



JULY

9 Michael McDonald
and Boz Scaggs



16 Peter Yarrow

& Noel Paul Stookey
of Peter, Paul and Mary

22 Glenn Miller Orchestra



AUGUST

16 The Beach Boys

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Keeping It Cool

DANBURY'S HOTEL ZERO DEGREES OFFERS COSMOPOLITAN FEEL IN COUNTRY SETTING

BY ERIK OFGANG

From the outside, Hotel Zero Degrees in Danbury has the look of a ski lodge. The 30,000-plus-square-foot building's striking exterior features large, exposed wooden beams that give off a modern country feel. Despite being mere minutes from Interstate 84, near the busy Connecticut and New York border, the new building is nestled in a quiet wooded area that wouldn't feel out of place in Vermont.

Inside the boutique hotel, however, the atmosphere is less country retreat and more cosmopolitan chic with modern decor reminiscent of upscale New York City lodgings. The lobby is a comfortable lounge with plenty of seating options and expansive windows that let in lots of



natural light and look out at the wooded area behind the hotel. The hotel is also home to Terra of Danbury, a fittingly chic restaurant run by Z Hospitality, a restaurant group that manages several other successful Connecticut eateries.

The 114-room boutique hotel, which opened in late November, is designed to attract a mix of business people, travelers and locals drawn to the restaurant and the more than 3,500 square feet of event space the hotel offers. It is the third hotel opened by RMS Companies, a Connecticut-based hotel and property management company. Zero Degree hotels opened in Stamford in 2009 and Norwalk in 2013. The company is also scheduled to reopen Hartford's historic Goodwin hotel this spring. Though that hotel will keep its historic terra cotta facade, the interior will be updated to remain consistent with the company's modern style and sensibilities.

Randy Salvatore, chief executive officer of Developer RMS Companies, says Danbury was chosen as a new Hotel Zero Degrees location because "the corporate and residential growth over the past few years in this area of Connecticut has been astounding." He adds, "We are looking forward to providing accommodations for business and leisure travelers."

The hotel features rooms with one king bed, rooms with two queen beds and suites that are available for extended stays. Each room has an open layout with ample working, lounging and sleeping space, with oversized showers in the bathroom and tubs available upon request.

Rooms in April and May ranged from \$109 (king) to \$289 (executive suite), but prices fluctuate. Kristen Cognetta, a member

of the hotel's sales team, says the venue has seen a lot of business guests during the week and many wedding parties and wedding guests on weekends. "There's really nothing like this hotel in the area," Cognetta says. "It's probably long overdue."

Another selling point is the restaurant. The original Terra restaurant opened in Greenwich in 1991 and remains a successful establishment on Greenwich Avenue. Z Hospitality group has since opened seven additional restaurants in the area, including Terra of Danbury. In Danbury, Executive Chef Albert DeAngelis has created an intriguing menu based off Northern Italian cuisine. Highlights from a recent tasting included goat cheese blintz, served with marinated beets, baby arugula and roasted walnuts, eggplant parmesan and tiramisu. The restaurant also features craft cocktails, a wine list with more than 100 varieties and solid beer options.

In the warmer months, both the restaurant and hotel will add outdoor seating on a large patio overlooking the lawn and woods behind the restaurant. These outdoor spaces will create another place where guests can enjoy country charms with a cosmopolitan vibe.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIDGE HOUSE

community

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

The organization: Bridge House

The story: In the 2013 edition of The Associated Press stylebook, a new entry on mental illness advises journalists to avoid “descriptions that connote pity,” like *afflicted with*, *suffers from* or *victim of*. Pity is a passive emotion, encircled in a closed loop, offering few solutions. At Bridge House, a voluntary drop-in center for adults living with persistent mental illness in the Greater Bridgeport area, the people who use the services there are not victims of mental illness. Nor are they *patients* or *clients*, other terms often used in the mental health-services world. Rather, the people who access services at Bridge House are called *members*. These choices in language reflect the larger philosophy that undergirds the work that Bridge House does.

“We focus on a person’s wellness, not their illness,” says Glen Carpenter, a member who led a recent tour of the facility. “This is a place that you can come to and there’s no failure.”

Located in a sprawling Victorian house on Bridgeport’s Fairfield Avenue, Bridge House provides meals, housing support, advocacy, employment assistance and a young-adult program for those living with mental illness in an avowedly nonclinical setting. Bridge House operates on what is known as the “Clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation,” and broadly speaking, works to integrate those living with chronic or persistent mental illness into the larger community through a battery of support services. Bridge House attacks the task of community integration with a holistic methodology that helps the organization’s roughly 240 active members develop employment, money-management and socialization skills. Because the program is completely voluntary, members come and go as they please, and on any given day, between 50 and 80 members will come through the door to access various services.

Bridge House is one of two Clubhouse-style facilities in the state to be fully accredited by Clubhouse International, which maintains 37 distinct standards covering governance structure, organization and what type of services are offered. (The other is Prime Time House in Torrington.)

Founded in 1986, Bridge House was established as part of a wave of new community-based approaches to mental health care that resulted from the era of deinstitutionalization, a gradual shift in mental-health policy that saw large, long-stay psychiatric

hospitals, such as Fairfield Hills in Newtown, shuttered. While primarily the result of changes in thinking that prioritized the civil and human rights of the mentally ill, the movement also incorporated notions of budgetary restraint and fiscal responsibility. Those who can access services in the community cost the state and associated authorities less money than those who are hospitalized, goes the thinking.

As with so many community organizations and support services across the state, Bridge House is bracing for budget cuts. Most of Bridge House’s funding comes from the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, which is at risk of cutbacks as lawmakers in Hartford tackle the state’s current fiscal crisis.

According to Executive Director Mary Ellen McGuire, Bridge House and its allies in other psychosocial day programs have been making the case that they are the most “cost-effective” use of state dollars. “If you were to shut down Bridge House, you could probably triple the amount of money it would cost to take care of our members in other situations, whether it’s the hospital, a jail cell or being homeless. We’re the first line of defense for them because we see when someone is not well,” she says.

One of the crown jewels of the Clubhouse model is the transitional-employment program, which connects members with local employers like Homegoods and the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport for six- to nine-month stints of paid work. Bridge House employees agree to guarantee coverage for any member who cannot make their shift. According to coordinators of the program, employers will occasionally hire Bridge House members for full-time work after their transitional-employment period.

For Samantha Burton, who has been diagnosed with schizophrenia and has been a member of Bridge House for 10 years, the facility plays a central role in her life. Bridge House “changes lives, it changes people’s minds. It helps you be more productive, and helps you achieve your dreams and goals. You’re not alone. This is like a safe haven for people with mental illness,” she says.

Bridge House will host a legislative breakfast to lobby lawmakers on May 8, and hosts open houses every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. Donations can be made at bridgehousect.org, or by contacting Nichole René at nrene@bridgehousect.org or 203-335-5339.

If you have an organization with an event that you’d like us to consider for the Community page, please send the details to mmurphy@connecticutmag.com.



The Amazing Comics Collection

Jon Berk was on summer break from law school at Boston University in the early 1970s when he spotted a Spider-Man comic on the racks of a local store. The sight startled him, and brought him back to his youth.

"I said, 'They still have Spider-Man?'" he recalls. "I opened it up and saw an ad for old comics and I said, 'What? They sell old comics?'"

"I started buying," he adds, meaning the new ones and the old. A hobby was born.

Once he got started, he couldn't stop. "I got into the art, the stories. Then I got into the history of comicbooks. I freely acknowledge it's an addiction of sorts. But it's stood me well."

Berk, who had invited me into his Cromwell home to talk about his passion and his decision to auction off most of his collection — which is more than 16,000 comicbooks and 250-300 pieces of art — insists the proper usage is "comicbook," not "comic book."

"It's not a comic book, not a funny book," he explains. "It's a comicbook! I'm not meaning to be pedantic. But I bug people all the time about it."

Why, at age 67, has Berk, who is an attorney, decided to sell off the thousands upon thousands of comicbooks and related artwork he labored so diligently to acquire over the past 40-plus years?

"There comes a time," he says, "and the time is now. My kids are out of the house. I had a lot of comicbooks. I didn't know where I was going to store them." For decades he kept them all in his basement, in "The Comic Room." But now many of those shelves are empty.

His collection was carefully packed up and transported to the Metropolis Gallery in New York City. It will be sold during an online auction at comicconnect.com from May 15 through June 16.

When word of Berk's decision to sell his collection began to spread among other comicbook collectors, there was great excitement.

"This is one of the coolest collections I have seen in my 30 years of dealing in comics," says Vincent Zurzolo, chief operating officer of ComicConnect and Metropolis Collectibles. "What is truly impressive about it is how early it starts, how rare many of the comics are and the vast number of incredibly high-grade comicbooks there are in the collection."

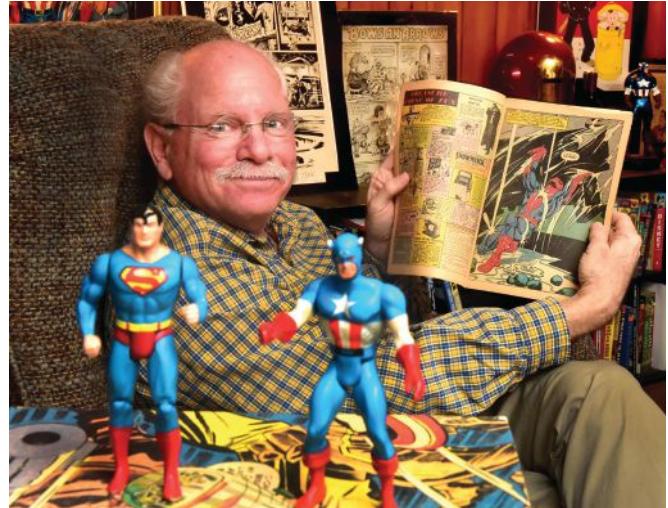
"The groundswell of interest is like nothing we've seen before," he adds.

Berk says he's embarrassed by all the attention, especially Zurzolo's statement that this collection is one of the most important in the world. "They're just comicbooks," Berk tells me. "Somebody else said, 'This is a museum-quality collection.' Yes, it is. That I will accept."

"I just feel fortunate to have acquired these books," Berk says. "I've been to the top of the mountain. The hobby's been very good to me and now I can be good to the hobby. I'm happy I can pass it on to somebody else."

Berk says people who know about his decision to part with his collection are remarking, "Gee, you must be sad." But he replies, "No. Why should I be sad?"

The money he receives from the sale certainly ought to make him happy. Included in his collection: *Action Comics No. 1*, from June 1938, the first appearance of Superman. In its day it sold for 10 cents; Zurzolo's company purchased one of them from somebody else for \$3.2 million.



Jon Berk of Cromwell holds an *Amazing Spider-Man No. 33* comicbook dated February 1966. Berk is auctioning most of his sizable collection of comicbooks and art, including his copy of *Action Comics No. 1*, the first appearance of Superman, but not his treasured *Spider-Man*. PHOTO BY PETER HVIZDAK

Berk paid \$20,000 for his copy. "I got a phone call one day," he says when asked how he obtained it. "I've probably had it for about 15 years."

"It's the grail," Berk says. "You feel you've been validated if you have *Action No. 1*."

And yet Berk, unlike most collectors, had no worries about taking that gem out of its plastic protective cover and passing it around among his friends. "I didn't care because I had total confidence they would handle it fine."

But Superman could never compete for Berk's heart when compared with Spider-Man. "When the new age of Marvel came in, 1964-65, I was at Hotchkiss School. Do you know how old Spider-Man was then? Fifteen. Do you know how old I was? He was a character my age, doing all those things."

But he also adored Spider-Man at age 7. "That's why I first got into comicbooks."

Berk still has in his basement a copy of his favorite story of all: *Spider-Man No. 33*, February 1966. In that saga, our hero saves his aunt from a villain. Flipping through the pages to show me the dramatic story line, Berk got a little choked up. "If that doesn't bring a tear to your eye, I don't know what will."

But among the framed artwork on the walls of his "Comic Room" one can see what Berk calls "my favorite book artistically from the Golden Age" (1938-1945). It's *Mystery Men No. 3* (October 1939), drawn by the great Lou Fine. "It's just beautiful," Berk says softly as he holds it up. "Lou Fine had a flair for composition. It's lyrical. He brought motion to the stagnant."

Berk stopped buying comicbooks about four months ago. "I knew it was over when I closed the (auction) deal." But he's holding on to about 40 comicbooks, including 10 early Spider-Mans and that No. 33. Nor can he bear to sell a Spider-Man artwork by Jack Kirby. "I couldn't let 'Spidey' go."

Randall Beach is the longtime columnist for the New Haven Register, where his column appears Fridays and Sundays.

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BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

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hartford.com/event/hookerdayparade

HOOKED ON HARTFORD

Hartford was founded in 1620 by Thomas Hooker, a Puritan minister who had departed from the older Massachusetts Bay Colony. The **Thomas Hooker Day Parade** has been held in October every year since Hartford Mayor Mike Peters put on the inaugural event in 1990. But this year, in an effort to rebrand the parade, the Hartford Business Improvement District, the group that organizes the event, has moved it to May 13. Bands, community and cultural organizations, and school groups will all take part.



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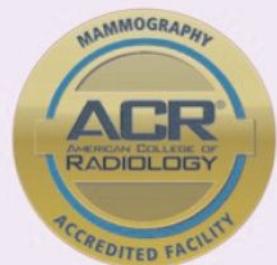
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|this month | the short list

▼ HARROWING HISTORY

As well as Jews, the Holocaust targeted gays and lesbians with a clinical ferocity. **Bent**, at the Brookfield Theater for the Arts on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from April 28-May 13, dramatizes the experience of Max and Rudy, two young gay men in 1934 Berlin, as the Nazi party is coming to power. Friday and Saturday shows are at 8 p.m., and Sunday shows are at 3. Tickets are \$20. brookfieldtheatre.org



See May 2017 calendar listings
at connecticutmag.com/calendar

SPEED DREAMS

Memorial Day weekend brings us the speed and high-octane thrills of Lime Rock Park in Lakeville. The **Pirelli World Challenge** will feature racing with some of the most beautiful cars in the world. On May 26-28, listen to the roar of the engines, surrounded by some of Connecticut's most picturesque countryside. Ticket prices vary depending on whether you want to camp (\$250) or just stay for the day (\$85). limerock.com



DENNIS A. MURPHY

FOR THE GOOD TIMES

Few songwriters have been as influential in American music as **Kris Kristofferson**. Known for writing some of the most famous songs performed by Johnny Cash and Janis Joplin, the legendary Americana singer-songwriter makes a stop at New London's Garde Theater on May 6. Tickets are \$38-\$68. gardearts.org

PHOTO BY ASH NEWELL

NATIVE NEW YEAR

One of coastal New England's great culinary traditions is the traditional clambake. According to the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, the clambake "holds important spiritual and cultural meaning for native people." This year the museum is hosting its **Native New Year Clambake** on May 27 at 1 p.m., preceded by traditional dancing and singing starting at 11 a.m. As of this writing, the price had not been determined. Check the website for updated info. pequotmuseum.org

◀ TO THE BOATS!

Mystic Seaport welcomes the warmer months and longer days with its annual **Salute to Summer**. According to the Mystic Seaport, the weekend will feature "19th-century lawn games; 19th-century carnival games; tug-of-war; harpoon throwing; relay races; and visitor whaleboat rowing." The fun is scheduled for May 27-28 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$28.95 for adults, \$26.95 for ages 65 and older, and \$18.95 for ages 4-14. mysticseaport.org



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Jack, Age 37 "I was working as a Police officer in April when I was injured on the job, lost the strength in my left arm and hand and had a lot of pain in my neck and midback. I saw many Doctors for 6 months with no resolution to my problem, whether Physical Therapy, Steroids, Pain Medication, or Nerve Block. The Surgeon wanted to do a 3 level fusion on my neck as the last treatment option. I saw the ad in the paper and decided I didn't have anything to lose and to give it a try, but it was my last chance before getting surgery. After my second visit I had regained all of my strength in my left arm and hand and had minimal pain in my neck. My life has drastically improved."

Duane, Age 77 "I woke up one evening with severe pain going down my right leg and went to a Doctor who couldn't tell me what was wrong. He told me to go home, take a hot bath and in a week if it didn't go away to come back. I had an MRI showing a bulging disc in the lower spine, with arthritis and gout. A family member told me about the Deep-Tissue Laser Treatment®, and after the first session the pain lessened significantly. At the end of the visit I could move around great. By the 5th or 6th visit I had no more pain in my leg and lower back. I am extremely satisfied, my legs are stronger, and I am standing up straight. This has been a fantastic thing and it all happened in 4 to 5 weeks. If I could tell you anything it would be to not take pain killers or have surgery until you experience incredible Deep-Tissue Laser Therapy".

| this month | front row

Kevin Nealon burst onto the national comedy stage as a cast member of *Saturday Night Live* from 1986 to 1995, where he was an anchor of *Weekend Update*. He's also a true Nutmegger, having grown up in Bridgeport. Today Nealon lives in the Los Angeles area, and he spoke to *Connecticut Magazine* about his history here, and his new act, which he brings to the Ridgefield Playhouse on May 4.

What can showgoers to the Ridgefield Playhouse expect?

Well, my standup is always evolving, just like I am as a person, and everybody is. It changes over the years and I start having different perspectives on things. My life changes, so the way I look at it changes, too. I like to put different types of spin on it. It's basically a standup monologue.

What are some of the bigger changes in your life over the last few years?

Well, I'm home more now. I'm not touring as much because I have a job on a sitcom called *Man With a Plan* on CBS on Monday nights with Matt LeBlanc ("Joey" from the iconic sitcom *Friends*). So that's been a big change for me. At first it was kind of like my wife was excited for me to be home, but after I was home so much she was like, "When's your next road gig?"

You've got a couple of private dates on your tour. What are those like?

Those are usually corporate gigs, for AT&T or whatever company. [The act] is a little more customized for them. They usually want a *Weekend Update* thing, so I'll customize the jokes for their company, and it's gotta be a little more clean for the corporate. My act isn't dirty, really. There's some innuendos. I'm not a comic that's on the dirty side.

KEVIN NEALON AT THE RIDGEFIELD PLAYHOUSE

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Both you and Matt LeBlanc were regular fixtures on network television in the '90s. Do you see yourselves as having a similar experience in showbusiness?

I think so, yeah. Although he's so up on sitcoms, and he really knows his stuff. He's so smart about characters and story development and ways to get as many laughs as you can out of a joke. So it's really been fun working with him and learning from him. He certainly has done a lot more sitcom work than I have. I was mostly live *SNL* sketch comedy and then [Showtime's] *Weeds* was single camera, so there wasn't an audience. But I do have my standup background, so I know about audience timing and stuff. But yeah, he's really good at the sitcom world.

Obviously a lot of people know you from *SNL* and *Weekend Update*. Do you watch a lot of *Weekend Update* these days?

No, I don't. I don't tend to watch it that much. Occasionally I'll catch it, if I hear it's a good show. There's just so much TV on now. I have a list on my phone of shows I have to watch that's like five pages long and everybody I run into has a new show on a new platform I've never heard of before that I have to watch.

What's high on your list right now?

Well, I just started watching the second season of *Love* on Netflix. I want to see *The Crown*. I've never even watched *The West Wing!* *The Wire!* I've only seen the first season of *Breaking Bad*. So I'm really very way behind. And there's a couple episodes of *Bonanza* I have to see.

This show is something of a homecoming for you. You grew up in Bridgeport?

That was my home. I lived there most of my life, from when I was 3 weeks old till I was 6, then we moved to Germany for four years because my father worked for Sikorsky Helicopters and they had a contract over there with — my father called it "a German outfit," so I thought he worked for lederhosen for years — it was with a helicopter company there. So Bridgeport, I have so many experiences for Bridgeport. Everything from going to school — I went to Notre Dame High School [in Fairfield] for two years, and then St. Joseph's [in Trumbull] — and then I went to Sacred Heart University [in Fairfield] and got a BF in marketing. A lot of my friends are still in Bridgeport. I used to lifeguard at Seaside Park for three years. My first job was at 30 Park Ave. It was a retirement home, and I was a dishwasher there. I worked at Sikorsky for a couple years in the factory, in the blade shop. It was good, honest, hardscrabble work there. I liked it because I was getting money to pay off my college loan and also getting money to travel to Europe. I was there for about two years and I remember the foreman came up to me one day and said, "What's a young guy like you working in a place like this for?" I said, "Well, I'm just trying to save some money to pay off my college loan and get some traveling money." And he smiled and he said, "Yeah, I said that 20 years ago."

I think I quit maybe a month or two after that.

| MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY |

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On Your Toes

WHETHER IT'S STUDENTS OR PROS, OUR STATE IS RICH IN BALLET TALENT

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

In many aesthetic frameworks, grace and power inhabit separate spheres. One is seen to exist at the expense of the other. Ballet is different. Power and strength of movement must *necessarily* inhabit the same physical body as graceful precision. Here's our list of some of the best ballet schools and companies in the state, many of which have been around for decades and are approaching milestones.

SCHOOLS

EASTERN CONNECTICUT BALLET

Old Lyme

With a pedigree that stretches back to some of the most influential and formative dancers in the history of American ballet, this Old Lyme dance institution is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Gloria Govrin, a graduate of the School of American Ballet and the New York City Ballet, was a protégé of the great George Balanchine, the Russian-born dancer and choreographer credited with being the father of American ballet. Govrin is ECB's artistic director, and brings with her a wealth of experience and connections to the New York ballet world. On May 6-7, ECB will present a double bill of *Ballerina Swan*, with original choreography from Govrin, followed by *Carnival of the Animals* at the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center in Old Saybrook.

easternctballet.com

HARTFORD CITY BALLET

Located on Gillett Street in Hartford's Asylum Hill, the Hartford City Ballet proudly champions the diversity of its students, and offers two different educational streams for young students between the ages of 3 and 18: a pre-professional, audition-only program, and an open recreational program. It also has adult classes and an intensive session during the summer.

hartfordcityballet.org

NEW HAVEN BALLET

The Elm City has its own small concentration of arts education, located on Audubon Street, between Orange Street and Whitney Avenue. The ACES Education Center for the Arts, the Creative Artists Workshop, Neighborhood Music School and The New Haven Ballet are all headquartered on the block. The

New Haven Ballet will put on its spring showcase May 20, featuring selections from *Swan Lake*, *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and *Adventures in Wonderland* at the Shubert.

newhavenballet.org

CONNECTICUT CONCERT BALLET

Manchester and Windsor

This dance school with studios in Manchester and Windsor has been around since 1973, training ballet dancers for all levels of performance. CCB also has a pre-professional program, with 50 students training for the highest ranks of ballet performance. The school's spring performances are scheduled for May 20-21 at Manchester High School's Bailey Auditorium.

ctconcertballet.org

NEW ENGLAND BALLET COMPANY

Bridgeport

Last December's performance of *The Nutcracker* at Bridgeport's Klein Memorial Auditorium marked the 25th year in a row the company has put on the holiday standard. Also performing at other area venues, including the Downtown Cabaret Theatre, NEBC is a pre-professional company comprising serious amateurs and professionals from around southwestern Connecticut. Auditions are held at the end of August each year.

newenglandballet.org

BALLET HAVEN

New Haven

Another new kid on the block in terms of ballet education, Ballet Haven directly challenges the notion of ballet as an elite or exclusive art form. Based in Fair Haven School, Ballet Haven offers after-school programs for girls that prioritize individual expression and empowerment for its mostly black and Latino students. A recent project called #BrownGirlsSpeaking has produced a short performance video, and centers dance in a notion of self-expression.

ballethaven.com

NUTMEG BALLET CONSERVATORY

Torrington

Housed in a truly beautiful building in downtown Torrington, the Nutmeg Ballet Conservatory trains and educates its dancers in a state-of-the-art studio with stunning views of the rolling hills of northwestern Connecticut. Founded in

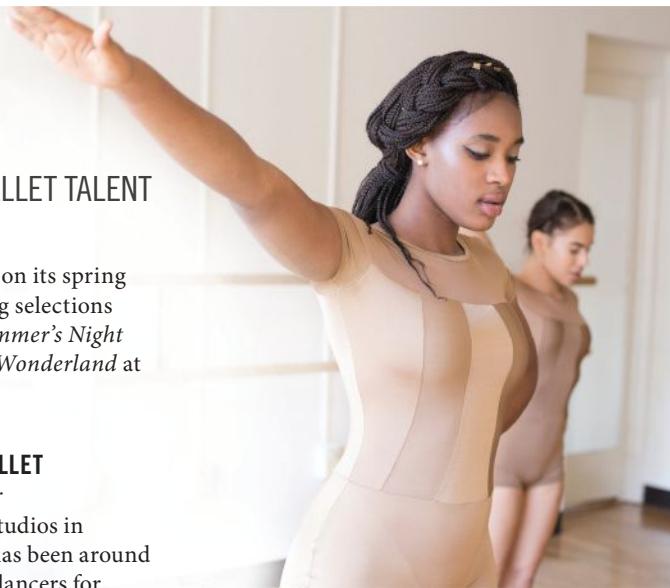


PHOTO BY BRITTANY SOLEM/BALLET HAVEN

1969, the conservatory is a fully residential educational program, with college academic preparatory classes in addition to dance instruction. The conservatory draws students from across the country and around the world, holding audition events in New York and Virginia this past March.

nutmegconservatory.org

PROFESSIONAL COMPANIES

MYSTIC BALLET

One of only a few professional ballet companies in the state, Mystic Ballet is concentrated in the southeastern corner, featuring dancers who have come to Mystic from all over the world. In 2009, the ballet company received an official citation from the state of Connecticut. "The extraordinary talent and creative genius of [Director] Goran Subotic and the Mystic Ballet have brought a new dimension of beauty to our community and our state," it reads.

mysticballet.org

CONNECTICUT BALLET

Stamford and Hartford

Director and dance instructor Brett Raphael is incredibly passionate about the accomplishments of Connecticut Ballet, as the professional company celebrates its 35th-anniversary season. Selected by George Balanchine at the age of 10 for a scholarship to attend the School of American Ballet, Raphael co-founded Connecticut Ballet in 1981. Since then Raphael has choreographed 10 full-length productions. Based in Fairfield County, Connecticut Ballet has been reviewed in *The New York Times* on several occasions. On May 6, the company will perform its 35th-anniversary showcase, a triple bill of classical, contemporary and jazz ballet at the Palace Theater in Stamford.

connecticutballet.org

Home-court Advantage

WNBA'S CONNECTICUT SUN ENJOY 15 YEARS AT MOHEGAN SUN

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

Nobody loves women's basketball like we do. We love it so much that the rest of the country celebrates our downfall, like when Mississippi State recently snapped UConn's 111-game winning streak at the NCAA Final Four in Dallas. That's fine. That game should put to bed, once and for all, the churlish assertion that the dominance of the UConn Huskies is bad for women's basketball. That loss created one of the best SportsCenter highlights of the year, for any sport, any gender. Millions saw that shot, as we played the Goliath to their David. Good for the Bulldogs. Now it's time to start a new streak. But what should hoops-hungry Connecticut fans do in the meantime?

Head over to Uncasville, where the WNBA's Connecticut Sun tip off their



The Connecticut Sun during a practice session. COURTESY OF MOHEGAN SUN

15th season May 13 against the Atlanta Dream. For the past decade and a half, the Sun have continued to break ground in the development of women's basketball in the U.S. The Sun's superlatives are numerous: first WNBA team that wasn't owned by an NBA team, first

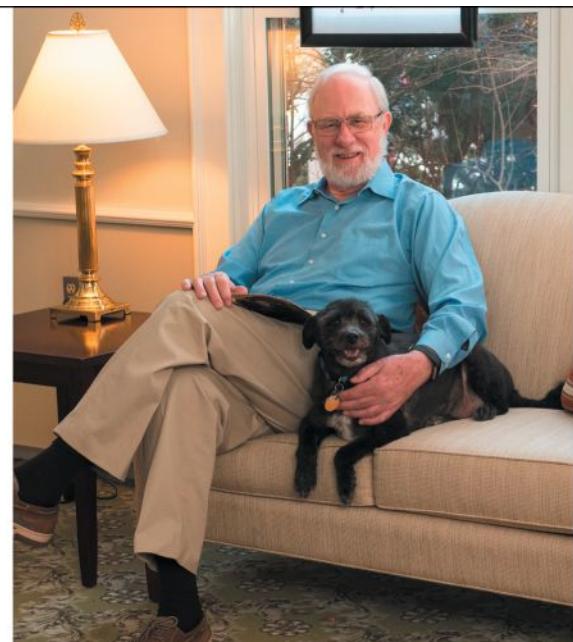
profitable franchise, most profitable WNBA franchise.

The origin of the team is a story Mohegan Sun CEO Mitchell Etess clearly enjoys telling. It starts with a phone call from a reporter, after a WNBA rule change loosened ownership rules, allowing

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non-NBA ownership of WNBA franchises.

The reporter wanted to know if Mohegan Sun would be interested in buying a franchise. "No, we don't really want to own a team. We'd just like to have some games here," Etess told the reporter. After he hung up, Etess says he began to entertain the thought, and approached the Tribal Council. Etess started calling people he knew in the NBA, so many times, in fact, that Etess describes it as harassment.

"Finally [NBA Commissioner] David Stern called me," Etess says. The call started a negotiation back and forth that would result in the league offering Etess and Mohegan Sun the option of buying one of two teams: Orlando or Miami. "We said, 'It probably makes sense to have Nykesha Sales,'" says Etess, referring to the Huskies star and Bloomfield native.

And so the Orlando Miracle became the Connecticut Sun for the 2003 season. With Sales already in place, the Sun made moves for another Connecticut legend, soon-to-be Hall of Famer Rebecca Lobo.

Amber Cox, the team's vice president, has worked for the Houston Dynamo of Major League Soccer as well as the WNBA's Phoenix Mercury, and says Connecticut is different. "You don't have the barrier of explaining or trying to convince people that women's basketball is a good product. That part of the conversation almost never comes up," she says.

The Sun seek to improve on last season's 14-20 record. After starting out 3-13, they went 11-7 over their final 18 games, closing the season with a three-game win streak. The team is looking to add depth, especially after losing star Chiney Ogwumike to an Achilles injury suffered while playing in China. (Many WNBA players play overseas in the offseason to supplement their income, a state of affairs that Etess is eager to change, hoping that soon WNBA players won't need to play overseas.)

Morgan Tuck, a UConn favorite now on the Sun's roster, has had to adjust to the level of competition in the WNBA. "You're playing against grown women, so the physicality is a lot more, [it's] faster, a higher-paced game," Tuck says. "You go from not losing a game to losing a lot of games in a quick amount of time. I think that's something that takes a lot of time to get used to," she says.

Tuck says that beyond the basic excitement of just getting drafted, she was happy to stay in Connecticut. "There's not a lot of places where you can play and really feel like you're important," she says. "You being a woman, that's also a player, is something that people [in Connecticut] appreciate. ... It was awesome to be able to stay here."

sun.wnba.com

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A Soldier's Story Told in Music

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

In order to be properly prepared for the performance of *Letter from Italy, 1944* at the Bushnell in Hartford, it may be important to ask a couple of questions. What do we owe those returning from the wars our country has sent them to? What are the best ways of addressing the trauma that war unleashes?

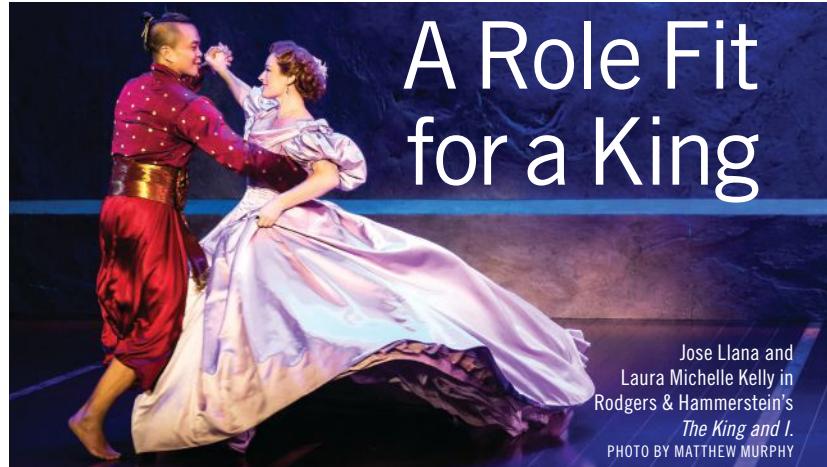
Letter from Italy, 1944 is an oratorio to be performed May 4 at 7:30 p.m. by as many as 200 voices from the Hartford and Greater Middletown chorales, along with orchestral accompaniment from the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. The performance, which combines photo and video projections alongside the music, is the work of sisters Nancy Meneely and Sarah Meneely-Kyder, and is a narrative based on the wartime experience of their father, John. He was a surgeon, deployed in the Aleutian islands in the Pacific Theater as well as Italy during World War II. Nancy, a lifelong poet and writer, inherited her father's written work and letters in the mid-1990s and wove them into poetry that, in the Grammy-nominated compositional expertise of Sarah, forms the lyrical content of the oratorio.

Nancy, who is retired from a previous career in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, is demure when asked about the ability of her poetry to confront trauma, deferring to the work of her sister. "It's the music which penetrates. Good music, well directed, sung with commitment ... lifts, can lift, an entire room of 700 people out of themselves, completely out of what parts of life can be bounded by thinking into some space which is *thoughtless*," she says.

While *Letter from Italy, 1944* (tickets: \$25-\$60) deals with World War II and its aftermath, the questions asked by the Meneely sisters remain with us. Soldiers returning from today's wars are living with trauma that may have been familiar to John Meneely. In 2012, the Veterans Administration estimated that roughly 22 vets commit suicide every day. John Meneely took his own life in 1963. When Sarah is asked about the role of her art in healing from trauma, she mirrors her sister. The poems contained in *Letter from Italy, 1944*, Sarah says, have "many different sections, some of which are in the avant-garde, some of which are atonal, some of which are more tonal, but it was multi-sectional." This quality made the poems a "microcosmic description of that change that occurred in him from the man he was that went to war to the very troubled man he became," she says.

One of the final moments of Sarah's oratorio draws on the last poem in Nancy's book, *Dream in the Last Third of Night*, and gives us an indication of what form healing might take: "He offers balm of song and memory. / The more I fill with what flows out of him / the more his figure dims / until there's only clarity."

860-987-5900, bushnell.org



Jose Llana and
Laura Michelle Kelly in
Rodgers & Hammerstein's
The King and I.
PHOTO BY MATTHEW MURPHY

It's good to be king. Especially after you've played a peasant.

Just ask Jose Llana, who, in 1995 as a freshman in college, was cast in the Broadway revival of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *The King and I*, starring Lou Diamond Phillips and Donna Murphy.

Now Llana is in the title role, playing the King of Siam first on Broadway — succeeding the Tony-nominated Ken Watanabe — and now on the national tour, which arrives at Hartford's Bushnell May 30 to June 4.

"It was a dream come true," Llana told me in a telephone chat from Houston, where the tour had landed.

The Philippine-born, Virginia-raised Llana says he learned how to be king through his mentors in that earlier revival: Phillips and Murphy. "I learned how to be a professional in that production," says Llana, who also played another country's leader not too long ago: Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the off-Broadway hit *Here Lies Love*. (He also

played Chip in Broadway's *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.)

"Lou led on-stage and off-stage by example and by the heart," says Llana. "He knew how important it was to create a sense of family in the production, especially since there are children in the cast. This tour has nine kids in the cast and someone is always having a birthday, or you have to be sensitive when kids are having a bad day because they might be feeling homesick."

"Having a show like that as my first professional show when I was 19 set the bar very high. It was a close company and we're still close, having reunions every few years."

As for *Here Lies Love*, which features original music by David Byrne and dazzling direction by Yale grad Alex Timbers, there is future life for the show. A new production now playing in Seattle may set the stage for its return to New York. In the meantime, Llana is having a royal time of it through August on tour.

bushnell.org



TABLES ARE TURNED

"Did you write a song named 'Table'?"

That's what director Gordon Edelstein asked Adam Gopnik, who wrote the book and lyrics for the world premiere of the Long Wharf Theatre musical that was originally called *Table* — and is now titled *The Most Beautiful Room in New York*.

Then Edelstein asked: "Did you write a song called 'The Most Beautiful Room in New York?'"

"Of course, that's the theme of the show," says Gopnik.

The point was well made about the musical, which centers on a contemporary family whose intimate restaurant, livelihood and identity are threatened.

"I had a deep attachment for the title *Table* because it's the name of the restaurant in the show, it's catchy and it's in the classic one-word-title tradition — though it did not have an exclamation point," Gopnik told me over coffee in Manhattan recently. "But the title *Table* was, in every sense, a little flat and is not an evocative word in itself. It didn't tell

you that much thematically, but *The Most Beautiful Room in New York* does. In truth, it was the title waiting to happen."

The New Yorker writer says he wants the musical, which runs May 3-28 and features music by Broadway veteran and Yale grad David Shire, to touch people. "That's the unique thing about musical theater: when it works, it touches people in a way that no other art form that I know can."

Though writing for the stage may be new, Gopnik knows a bit about the stage and camera as a kid actor. "I was the face of Big Brothers of America in its commercial: 'Won't you be a big brother to someone like me?' That was me."

longwharf.org

BEN VEREEN'S ROOTS

"I thought it was a good attempt and good that they kept *Roots* alive," says Tony Award-winner Ben Vereen of last year's television remake of 1976's *Roots*.

Vereen played the memorable Chicken George in the original *Roots* mini-series, which made television history 40 years ago.

Vereen was disappointed the producers of the reboot did not invite members from the original cast, not necessarily to be part of the filming but to be part of the dialogue and events surrounding the show.

"We were there with Alex Haley," he says, "so those who are doing the roles now [should] know whose shoulders they are standing on."

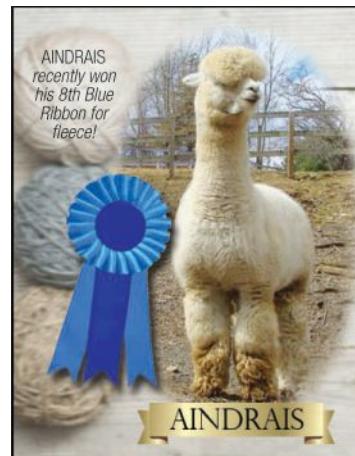
Vereen, 70, will bring his own solo show — which he is labeling his *Gratitude Tour*, and may be the last time he takes his autobiographical

show out on the road — to the Ridgefield Playhouse May 21.

ridgefieldplayhouse.org

HAVE YOU HEARD ...

... that two-time Tony Award-winner Judith Light (known for roles in small-screen comedies such as the mom on *Who's the Boss?* and, more recently, Amazon's *Transparent*) will receive the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's Monte Cristo Award at its annual gala in New York on May 21? Each year, the Waterford theater center honors a person who makes an indelible mark on American theater.



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When the State Won't Pay for Dental Care

Unlike a visit to a dentist's office, the pain of inadequate dental coverage never wears off.

Now imagine you're an adult in one of the state's poorest families, covered by Medicaid and enrolled in Husky Health's dental insurance program. It's better than no coverage, but often is still not enough.

That's a fact of life in the nation's perpetual arm-wrestle over public health. Whatever public-health reform finally looks like, it won't change the fundamentals of dental care for the poor. Coverage will remain an optional benefit, leaving it up to each state.

Connecticut is one of only 16 states that offers comprehensive dental benefits for adults covered by Medicaid. Eighteen others offer limited benefits and 13 offer emergency care only. Four states provide no benefits. (In Connecticut, a family of two must have income under \$24,831, a family of three under \$31,248, to qualify for Medicaid.)

So when does a state, even one like Connecticut with some of the most generous Medicaid dental benefits, decide it has gone far enough?

A middle-aged woman covered by Husky Dental, unable to work as she cares for a disabled family member at her shoreline home east of Branford, found out when a temporary crown in the lower-right part of her mouth fell off. She then lost most of an adjacent tooth after it cracked, which would have required a second crown. The state denied coverage for both crowns even though the openings were so big that the teeth could not sustain fillings.

"There are program limitations of benefits that allow for the reasonable restoration of a person's oral health and functional capacity," says David Dearborn, a spokesman for the state Department of Social Services, which oversees the Husky program.

The two teeth, known to dental professionals as Nos. 29 and 30, looked like a satellite view of Greek ruins — unsightly and potentially harmful to her health if bacteria entered her bloodstream through the mouth — after the fillings fell out, then fractured again after two temporary fillings.

The woman, frustrated, spent almost two months with the two teeth severely damaged and exposed before finally contacting The CONNsumer.

"It was very uncomfortable," says the

woman, who we'll call Marshanne because she asked not to be identified. "Then I started to have problems. It affected the gums. Sometimes there was blood coming out."

STATE VS. STATE

Before Marshanne moved to Connecticut in late 2015, a dentist in New York placed the temporary crown approved by that state's Medicaid program. But when her address changed, so did her benefits: Connecticut's Husky Dental would not finish the crown.

So Marshanne went to Shoreline Modern Dental in Old Saybrook, which replaced the temporary crown in February 2016 with an oversize filling. That same day, it also tried to salvage the cracked adjacent tooth, the farthest back, with another large filling.

Dr. Bradley Daar, who owns the practice and did some of the work on Marshanne's teeth, did not respond to a request to speak with The CONNsumer. But there was no doubt that each tooth needed a crown. Marshanne's patient records, which The CONNsumer reviewed, even recommended an extraction and implant in a subsequent exam.

Dr. Jane Yin of West Hartford Dental, who agreed to a professional review of Marshanne's records, called the original crown "the long-term restorative choice in this case."

"Without a crown," she says, "the tooth might fracture when she eats. There's a potential loss of the tooth if it's fractured in the middle. And if she loses the tooth, it will cost more to restore the tooth and stabilize the occlusion."

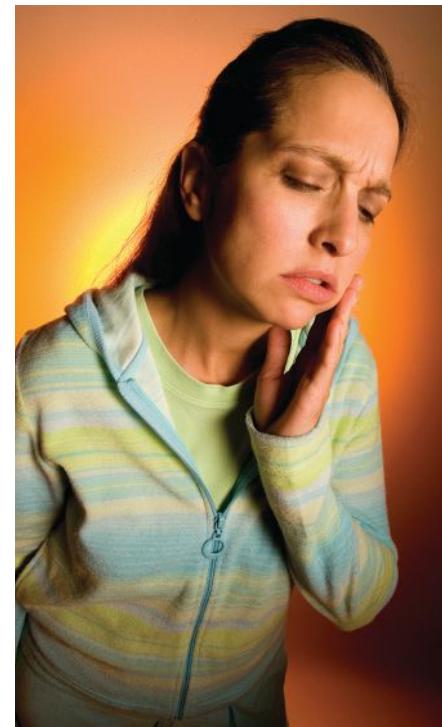
Marshanne, with gaping holes in her teeth, says her dentist told her the two crowns would cost \$4,000. Her patient records in July noted she was "saving for crowns out of pocket." If only that were possible: Marshanne didn't even own a car for close to two years.

"One of my [Husky] patients was in pain and I did root canal therapy for her without authorization," says Yin. "I never got paid for this work. I would rather focus on patient care than fight for payment."

Yin dropped out of the Husky adult plan.

THE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION

A crown is among the procedures requiring a prior authorization, reviewed by a dentist affiliated with the Connecticut Dental Health Partnership (part of the



CREATAS IMAGES/THINKSTOCK

Husky Health program), before Husky Dental approves payment.

Marshanne says because she never received written notice of the two-crown denial — she found out through her dentist — she did not know she could have requested an appeal hearing.

The Department of Social Services must receive a hearing request form (visit ctdhp.com for more information) within 60 days of its ruling on the prior authorization. If a condition needs more immediate attention, the patient will receive a response within a day of filing a request. It's rare that an appeal is approved: only one of the 20 decisions in 2016 was an approval.

Donna Balaski, director of dental services at the Department of Social Services and also a dentist, fast-tracked Marshanne's case and arranged a second opinion for her in mid-September. Within days, Marshanne was in Shoreline Modern Dental for two crowns, both approved.

Balaski did not respond to a request to discuss the case, but Marshanne was elated.

"It's a big relief," she says now. "My teeth were chipping away every day. Right now I can chew!"

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Mom, is the staff friendly there?



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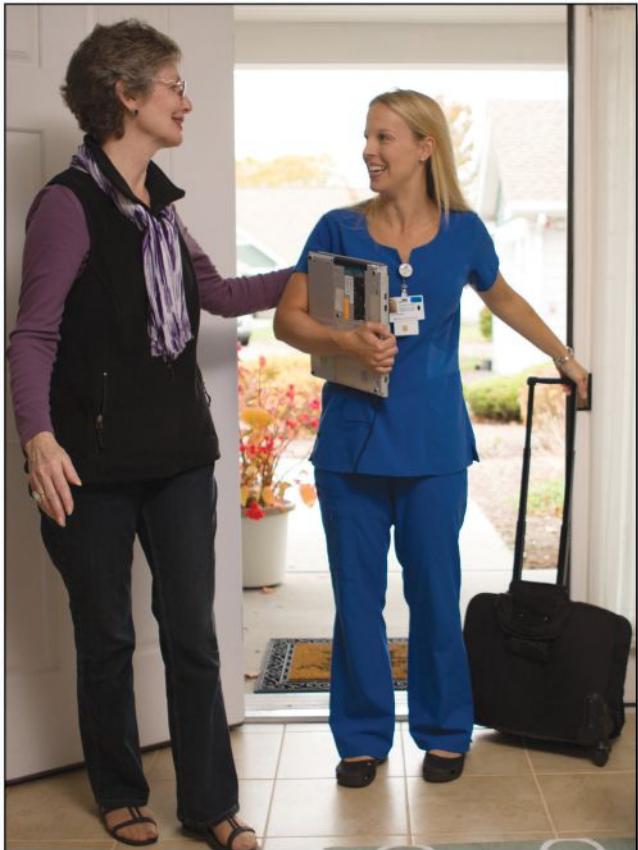
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'MY KIDS DON'T WANT MY JUNK'

THE LESSONS I LEARNED WHEN IT WAS TIME TO DOWNSIZE MY LIFE, AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

BY MARYELLEN FILLO

I dragged myself through what seemed like the 1,000th trip to the dumpster in the driveway that January day when reality hit: My kids don't want my junk. And they didn't want their old stuff either. No one does!

There it all was, piled high inside that huge 30-yard container-turned-coffin — 45 years of family memories and bad decisions that should have been thrown away long ago, including three kids' worth of first drawings, report cards, class awards, birthday cards, first booties, honor roll news clippings, high school graduation cap tassels, dance costumes, recital programs, college graduation tickets, all carefully collected for decades in boxes that bore their names. Remnants of my "little ones" past were mixed in with memories of mine

and their dad's, including boxes and bins of pictures, high school prom gowns, letter sweaters, three sets of vintage Samsonite luggage, old record albums, 22 boxes and totes of over-the-hill Christmas decorations, garbage bags of tired linens, broken furniture, odd lots of sheet music, vintage college texts and newspapers, outdated household accessories, knick-knacks, baby furniture, games, books, tools and everything else our family had accumulated in the full, third-floor attic and basement of our 90-year-old, 1,600-square-foot colonial in Plainville. You get the picture. It was a lot of stuff. But it was time for me to move and the clock was ticking. I had to empty the house and only had a few days to get it done.

"I told you we didn't want this stuff," my sensible social-worker daughter said to

me, as I whined that the precious box I had handed her at the back door had been so unceremoniously tossed. "You don't listen to us," she said. "We *told* you we don't want this stuff." Adding insult to injury, she sternly reminded me that she had told me I should have started packing a year ago. "Everyone *told* you to get started on this and not wait until the last minute," she reminded me for the 50th time. "We *told* you."

Yes, they had. And so had my late husband, as well as assorted friends and co-workers who have already been through the hell of downsizing. So had a host of authors through dozens of books on creatively and concisely purging a household. I thought I had it all planned in my head when I made the decision to downsize a year ago. Somehow it all fell apart, and when the closing was three

weeks away, I panicked, big time.

But I digress.

I write this for a couple of reasons: No. 1, I was asked to; and, No. 2, as a favor to my fellow baby boomers who may be downsizing soon. Trust me, I am the last one to take advice from others, but on this topic, you simply must listen. There is no easy way to clean out the house. And, NO ONE WANTS YOUR STUFF!

Our family of five had a very traditional middle-class life in what, in 1972, was our dream house. It was a happy home with all the accoutrements of the day, including good china and crystal rarely used, spring and winter curtains, bedspreads and rugs, crowded rooms of generations of furniture, bookcases full of picture albums (photos that in many cases were duplicates or just plain bad) and decades of decorative whims that ended up being packed away in the aforementioned attic, a conglomerate of crap reflecting the second-hand phase, the pottery phase, the crystal phase, the terrarium and macramé phase, the dried-flowers phase, the brown-pine-furniture phase and the rustic phase. And then there were the old clothes and shoes that seemed to be stored everywhere. I can't even write about that.

Getting rid of it all wasn't easy. Since my new life is soon boiling down to 800 square feet of attic-less, cellar-less space, I was faced with few options when it came to jettisoning the junk. One thing I did right, thanks to the not-so-gentle kid, who last Mother's Day gifted me with the first of the dumpsters I would need, was to (kind of) go through the attic when the house went on the market.

That first purge of the superfluous, of course, led to the perfunctory spring tag sale. My advice on this: be prepared! It doesn't matter that the silverplate tea service that hasn't seen the light of day since 1969 was expensive or that you scrimped like a crazy person on the grocery budget in 1978 so you could buy the overpriced leather coat you lusted for. You are not going to make your money back. So think of a tag sale as a way to get rid of stuff. And any money you do make? Donate it to a favorite charity or get yourself a massage and facial. You will be earning it.

That tag sale not only got the ball rolling — although I swear some of the things I sold I have seen in various area consignment shops — but also benefited a host of nonprofits. Those tired linens were donated to a local animal shelter. Clothes and household items went to Goodwill and the Salvation Army. Furniture went to a wonderful organization in Bristol called For Goodness Sake, which offers aid such as furniture and household goods to individuals and families transitioning to independent



Writer MaryEllen Fillo's former Plainville home

living. Unfortunately, the initial effort barely put a dent in my mountain of things.

Fast-forward to October when I knew the house was sold and the closing would be in January. I stockpiled more than 80 empty cardboard boxes in anticipation of having a carefully planned, organized, stress-free packing experience. It didn't happen. Instead I kept telling myself that delaying the packing project until after the holidays would make more sense. It didn't.

One daughter did thankfully want my china and crystal and some serving pieces from the pantry. Because she is an organizational freak, she made quick work of that by packing it all up on Dec. 26. My son, sons-in-law and construction business-owner daughter went through piles and piles of tools, taking those that had both utilitarian and sentimental value. One daughter went through most of the pictures, dividing them into piles for herself and her siblings. I thought we were rolling right along. We weren't.

There is this thing called the heart. And sometimes you just can't throw stuff away, no matter how useless it may seem. Emotions and sentiments take over. Case in point: when my mother-in-law passed away, she left behind two boxes full of high school memorabilia, including her dance cards from the 1932 and 1933 proms at Plainville High School: pretty little paper booklets with a pencil dangling by the side. And inside, a list of the boys she danced with, including the guy who would eventually become her husband, my father-in-law. There was her wedding corsage and old newsletters from Trumbull Electric, now General Electric, where she was



employed for decades. There were sepia-toned pictures of my father-in-law when he worked as a butcher at a now-defunct downtown meat market and another of my mother-in-law when she was a teenager in front of her then-residence above the old Burt's Restaurant in Plainville. Those old pictures and cards, I don't know. I just couldn't throw them away. Just like I could not throw away the two dozen years of high school yearbooks that were housed on bookshelves at our house. Nor the spinning wheel, the hand-held garden plow from an ancestor's farm that had been stored in the garage, or the family's carefully catalogued World War II ration coupons that had never been used but were saved and still, somehow in my mind, had value.

I called our local historical society and felt like I had hit the lottery! They couldn't

Expert Tips on Decluttering Your Life

Author and estate guru Julie "The Estate Lady" Hall, a national expert when it comes to moving, downsizing and "getting rid of," has written several books on the subjects, including *Sell, Keep, or Toss?: How to Downsize a Home, Settle an Estate and Appraise Personal Property* and *Boomer Burden: Dealing With Your Parents' Lifetime Accumulation of Stuff*. A director of the American Society of Estate Liquidators, Hall offers pointers on "letting go."

- Just because an item is old doesn't necessarily mean it is valuable. Sentimental value is very different from market value. The crucial "first step" is to understand the values of what you have, so you can make sound decisions as you move forward in the process.
- Record a video of your home as it was, before you begin to empty it. If you are clearing out a family member's estate, distribute the video to siblings as a memory.

• Photographs are a great idea, especially of individual items that have meaning to you, but you have no place to store the actual items.

• If you find vintage and antique photos, scan and keep them digitally, or distribute to family members in an estate.

• You can always create a memory book online with Shutterfly, Smilebox, Snapfish and other vendors. Memory books take up much less space and will be treasured.

• Don't keep something just for the sake of keeping it. Be thoughtful and minimalistic in your clearing-out process. You don't need multiple sets of anything. Do you really need it and have a purpose for it?

• The more stuff you keep, the more it becomes a monkey on your back. The stuff doesn't go away without your efforts. One day, your heirs will have to clear out what you keep.

• Give to those who are really in need. That

item that you "might need one day" is needed every day by someone else.

• Donate to those less fortunate. If you decide to have a sale, arrange to donate the items that did not sell.

• Be honest and realistic. Have healthy boundaries and realize that space is limited.

• Ask yourself some pointed questions: Will I use this item? Why am I keeping it? Is there someone who could use it more? Am I keeping it because I don't want someone else to have it?

• Escort "guilt" to the door. You don't need to carry that.

• Select very carefully for a future generation. They probably will not want what you keep for them.

• If you want to give something to a future generation, why not gift it now? You'll enjoy seeing them happy, and it will be out of your way.

| MARYELLEN FILLO |



wait for me to bring it all there. And now those bits and pieces of memories, which also include 1950s-era Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and Little League uniforms, are on display for others. And somehow my heart found peace with that. I could let them go.

I turned to Craigslist to take care of some other purging matters. Vintage Roy Rogers ranch sets, mid-century soldier playsets, dolls, dress-up costumes and assorted other toys found new homes. I used eBay as a guide to pricing, and have to admit I was shocked when one set sold to a New York man, not for the contents, but for the 75-year-old box that had somehow stayed fairly pristine in a cabinet in the cellar.

Using Facebook, boxes and boxes of vintage costume jewelry were scooped up quickly by crafters who use the old paste, rhinestone, porcelain and pearl bobs to

craft new pieces that are now very fashion forward. Hundreds and hundreds of books were donated to schools, libraries and nonprofits. Old CDs, 8-track tapes, DVDs and cassette tapes went to convalescent homes and hospitals. Walkers, wheelchairs and other medical equipment that we had needed once upon a time were also donated to a nearby facility that loans them to those who don't have the means or insurance to purchase their own.

When it came to the kitchen and pantry, a kind neighbor and master of moving brought some tough love and coffee on one of my worst days of packing. As we looked at a cabinet shelf packed with 35 coffee mugs — even though I live alone — she simply commanded, "Choose 12." I did and the rest became part of a pile of too many bowls, baking ware, dishes, glasses, silverware and kitchen items I had not used in years (including the George Foreman grill and the chocolate fountain.) Within a day, they were picked up from my front door by a nonprofit and on the road to a new life, hopefully by someone who could use them.

Gardening tools and lawn-care items were passed on to my son-in-law and daughter who are moving from a condo to their first home. I am pretty sure I am never going to need a 100-foot rubber hose again.

I attacked bins of too-small or too-dated clothes I could never wear again if my life depended on it, sending some to consignment and the rest to nonprofits for resale there. I did keep my wedding gown, but I have a pass-it-on plan for that. Slowly but surely, rooms emptied, and while the last 24 hours of packing wasn't pretty, it got done.

The moral of the story is do it sooner rather than later, and if you are not looking at it, using it or wearing it more days than not, give it away, pass it on or throw it away. Had I been organized sooner, even more of my household could have found a new home far better than the landfill where it ended up. My new mantra is that when it comes to stuff, nothing new comes into my life without something old going out. Better still, stop buying, especially when you know you are on the downhill side of life and should be using up everything you have, including your energy and spirit and *joie de vivre*. Celebrate a lighter life. The things I kept for sentimental (my 1962 Beach Boys *Surfin' Safari* album, even though I have no record player) or financial reasons (I paid a fortune for those Waterford candlesticks and plan to keep them even though I seldom entertain anymore) are the things I now know that I want. And the few things that the children and grandchildren did want, well, I cannot tell you how happy it makes me to see them enjoyed while I am here rather than after I am gone.

Nineteenth-century British artist and designer William Morris had a wonderful quote, and my plan is to someday embroider it on a pillowcase that, of course, will be used every day! "Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful."

That's my new plan.

And if I find myself slipping, this will be on the other pillowcase thanks to American novelist and poet Wendell Berry: "Don't own so much clutter that you will be relieved to see your house catch fire."



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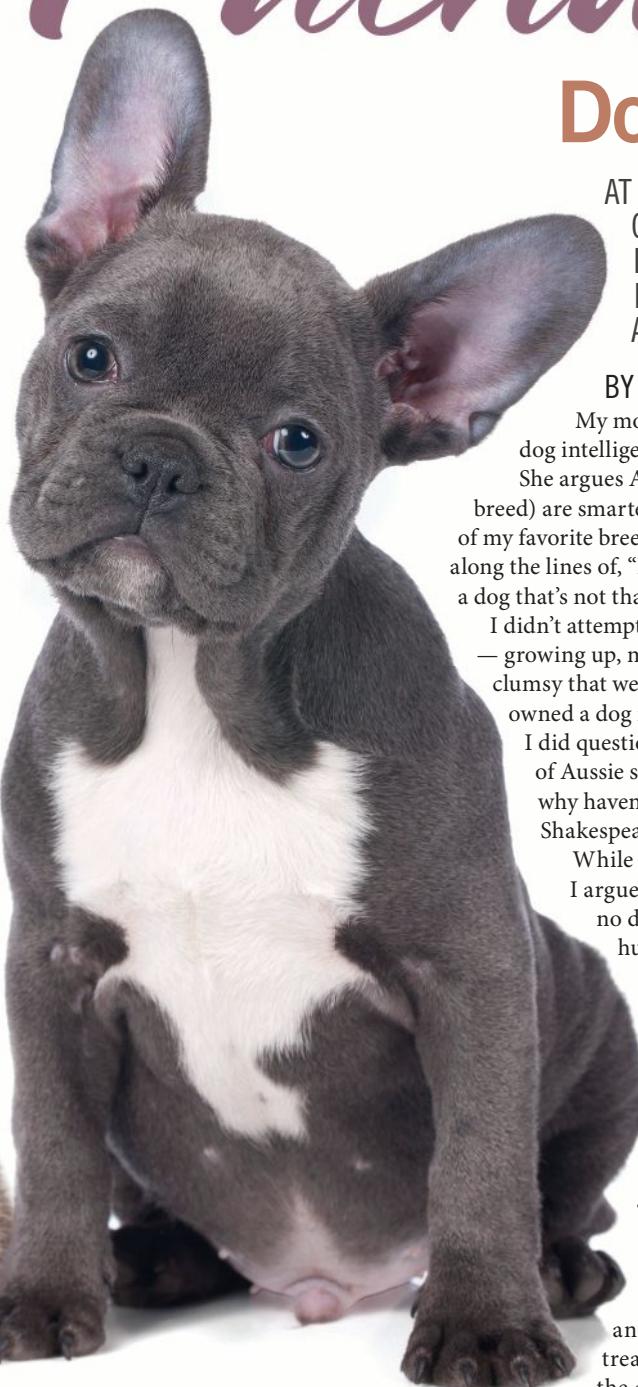
Our Furry Friends



WE LOVE OUR PETS. IN FACT, MANY PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN TO CALLING THEIR DOGS, CATS AND OTHER FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS "FURBABIES" AND "FURKIDS." AND MORE AND MORE PET OWNERS REFER TO THEMSELVES AS "FURPEOPLE," "PET PARENTS" AND "PET GUARDIANS." ALL OF THESE TERMS SPEAK TO HOW CLOSE WE ARE WITH OUR PETS. IN MANY WAYS, THEY ARE PART OF THE FAMILY. ON THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, WE CELEBRATE THESE RELATIONSHIPS, WHICH SEEM TO GET STRONGER WITH EACH PASSING DAY.



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INSIDE

- How do dogs think and how smart are they, really? Yale's Canine Cognition Center is getting closer to finding out.
- How did the IRS turn our writer into a dog lover?
- Cat Tales: The story of one rescue organization's mission of mercy
- The life of a country vet: Making house calls for cows, horses and more
- Broadway, film and TV animal trainer Bill Berloni's tips on finding the right dog



Dog Smarts

AT YALE'S CANINE COGNITION CENTER, THE THOUGHT PROCESS OF DOGS IS BEING STUDIED ... AND YOU CAN HELP

BY ERIK OFGANG

My mother-in-law and I disagree on dog intelligence.

She argues Australian shepherds (her favorite breed) are smarter than Labrador retrievers (one of my favorite breeds). She once said something along the lines of, "Labs are great, if you don't mind a dog that's not that smart."

I didn't attempt to defend the intellect of Labs — growing up, my family's Lab was so goofy and clumsy that we joked if *The Three Stooges* had owned a dog it would have been him — but, I did question the supposed superior wisdom of Aussie shepherds. "If they're so smart, why haven't I met one that I can discuss Shakespeare with?" I asked.

While Labs may not be great scholars, I argued, when it came right down to it, no dog is actually smart, not in the human sense of the word.

That was before I heard about the dogs that go to Yale.



The Yale Canine Cognition Center opened in December 2013. Each year since its inception, about 500 dog volunteers and their "companions" (owners) have participated in scientific studies at the center. They have solved puzzles and played games, and been rewarded with lots of treats, and, after repeated visits to the center, with degree certificates. There are even advanced awards such



Cat Tales

WITH NO ANIMAL SHELTERS IN MIDDLETOWN OR CROMWELL, NONPROFIT RESCUE ORGANIZATION FILLS A NEED

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

In the late 1990s, a hospice nurse for Middlesex Hospital named Debbie Bagley was driving down Main Street in Middletown when she saw a pile of kittens in front of the Middletown Armory (now the Inn at Middletown). Always an animal rescuer, Bagley scooped up the kittens and took them to a veterinarian. Two of the kittens in particular looked to be in terrible

shape. When she called back several hours later, no one had attended to the animals, and the two kittens had died.

"It just kind of left this terrible void, you know, that

said 'we need to do more,'" Bagley says.

Today Bagley has 12 cats. Many are cats that her rescue organization, Cat Tales, has not been able to place in permanent homes. For the past 18 years, Bagley has rescued, gotten appropriate care for and subsequently housed thousands of cats rescued from the streets of Middletown and Cromwell. Because neither Cromwell nor Middletown have animal control shelters, Cat Tales partners with Cromwell and Middletown animal control officers. "We rescue from them, because there is no pound" in either town. "That, to me, is crazy," Bagley



as the Paw Beta Kappa ribbon and the Fulbark Fellowship.

These so-called "dog scientists" are helping researchers at the center learn about how canines think about the world, says Laurie Santos, director of the Comparative Cognition Laboratory and the Canine Cognition Center at Yale. The worldview of dogs is of interest not just as it relates to dog problem solving in and of itself, but also because of how the behavior of our four-legged best friends offers insight into our psyches. "Dogs can provide this wonderful window into how humans make sense of the world," Santos says. "They grow up around us. They grow up in the same environment that human children grow up in, so studying how dogs learn can provide this really interesting comparison with how humans learn and what humans know about the world."

The study of dog behavior has long been part of psychology (remember Ivan Pavlov and his salivating dogs from Psych 101?), but the field has grown increasingly popular in recent years with canine cognition centers like the one at Yale sprouting up at spots such as Duke University in North Carolina, the University of California at Berkeley, and Barnard College in New York City.

Recent studies have shown dogs of all breeds are often more intelligent than I, or even my mother-in-law, gave them credit for. Chaser, a famous border collie from South Carolina once profiled on *60 Minutes*, knows more than 1,000 words. And when it comes to humans, dogs as a rule seem to, well, really get us.

"Dogs are a lot more sophisticated than we thought," Santos says. "They're really good at solving problems, they're really good at using subtle cues. They're really good at reasoning about us and being motivated to reason about us. That means this process of domestication shaped this cognitive creature that's really built to be around us to some important extent."

She adds, "Dogs are better at paying attention to human cues and social cues than even chimpanzees, our closest living evolutionary relatives."

A recent study conducted at Yale's



YIYUN HUANG

Canine Cognition Center suggests that not only are dogs smart, in some ways they're more efficient learners than humans.

When learning from someone, humans often fall prey to what's known as over-imitation. "If you were to watch a human teacher teach you how to solve a puzzle and that teacher did it in kind of a dumb way — they used extraneous information, they performed a bunch of irrelevant steps to solve the puzzle — research shows that you might be prone to imitate those irrelevant steps, even though you probably knew you didn't need to," Santos says.

During a past study of humans conducted at Yale by Dr. Frank Keil and colleagues, children watched a demonstrator solve a puzzle by first moving a lever and then lifting a lid to pull out a prize. Although the lever was not necessary to open the lid, children repeatedly performed both actions, even when they were in a race to solve the puzzle as quickly as possible.

Santos and her colleagues hypothesized that dogs would behave similarly to children and incorporate the bad habits of their teachers. They didn't.

Instead, dogs seemed to understand which part of the instructions they were given were irrelevant to solve a simple puzzle. For the study, a dog puzzle box with a lid was designed with a lever that didn't have any effect on whether the lid opened. During the experiment, researchers told the dog to look, then shifted the lever, which served no purpose, and opened the lid. When dogs learned how to open the box, most stopped using the lever and went straight to opening the lid.

Santos says the study published in the



Vader works through an over-imitation puzzle box. PHOTO BY ALYSSA ARRE

journal *Developmental Science* last fall showed, "Dogs were pretty good at ignoring information that humans provided that was irrelevant, and in that sense, they're actually better at processing information and learning from teaching than even humans."

April Ruiz, dean of Yale's Calhoun College (renamed after Grace Murray Hopper) and a cognitive scientist, has brought her dog, Benjamin Westbrook, to participate in studies at the Canine Cognition Center since it opened. In addition to learning where the treats are stored, Ben, a 4-year-old rescue who's part cavalier, spaniel and cockney, participated in the over-imitation puzzles, and, like other dogs, learned to ignore the unnecessary lever movement.

Ruiz says that in addition to learning more about how her own dog thinks, the studies conducted at the center have fascinating implications. "It's one of those growing subfields of cognitive science right now, and there's so much more to learn. ... We live in homes with dogs; we're very motivated to make them our family members. People have Instagram accounts for their dogs. There are people who cry over commercials with dogs and don't care about other humans. It's interesting to figure out about the very intentional interspecies partnership that we've created over generations. What does

that actually mean? And how might dogs be conceptualizing what that partnership is? What have we created?"

To better answer these questions, many studies are underway at the Yale Canine Cognition Center. These include research projects designed to gauge how dogs respond to various human emotions, whether they consciously try to help humans solve problems (early results from ongoing studies indicate they are indeed motivated to help humans), and studies determining whether dogs can use logic to learn new words. For instance, Santos says if a dog knows what a ball is and, "I had a ball on the table and some novel object that it didn't know the word to, and I said, 'Hey, look at the blanket,' would they know that that new word must go with the new object?"

As for who was right in the debate about whether Aussies are smarter than Labs, Santos says neither is correct. "I think everyone has intuition that some breeds are smarter than others, but in practice, when you actually study that question, what you find is that there is less differences between breeds than you think," Santos says. "What looks like differences between breeds is often differences in training."

For information about having your dog participate in a study at Yale's Canine Cognition Center, go to doglab.yale.edu.

Cat Tales (Cont.)

says. After a rescue, Cat Tales works to get a cat necessary veterinary attention, spayed and neutered, and placed in permanent homes after a foster-home period. The organization usually has about 10 foster homes, and is entirely staffed by some 40 volunteers.

Bagley says the organization needs at least \$100,000 a year to perform its work. Spaying and neutering, providing veterinary care and litter and feeding hundreds of cats sucks up most of the Cat Tales budget. "We have to really make smart decisions about how we rescue, how we adopt out," Bagley says.

She says that over the years she's been operating Cat Tales, "people are finally opening their eyes a little more to what rescue is and what some of the root causes are." The awareness of feline overpopulation and the importance of spaying and neutering is more prevalent now than in years past.

On June 10, Cat Tales is hosting its annual Walk-A-Thon at Middlesex Community College. Registration is at 9:30 a.m., while the walk and run begins at 10:30. Those who are interested can donate to Cat Tales, a 501(c)3 organization, at cattalesct.org.

On the Road with a Country Vet

LARGE-ANIMAL VETERINARIANS
MUST BE READY FOR ANYTHING ...
EVEN A RAKE TO THE FACE

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

Doctors don't often make house calls anymore. The image of the crisply dressed physician appearing on the doorstep to attend to the sick is all but gone from the American health care system. Not so for large-animal veterinarians. By the very nature of their work and size of their patients, vets that treat horses, cattle, sheep and goats must travel and make house calls.

The work, then, does not conform to the way the practice of medicine is typically envisioned or portrayed: in clean, sterilized rooms, under fluorescent light, with white coats and the smell of disinfectant. Once, when Dr. Caitlin McIntosh was making a visit to a dairy barn to see a cow, she stepped on the teeth of a rake and the handle flew up and hit her in the face. "Totally Three Stooges," she says, laughing wearily at the memory. It broke her nose, and she says the pain was worse than childbirth. (Her son was 4 months old at the time, so one can



Veterinarian Caitlin McIntosh PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

assume she is not guilty of hyperbole.)

After breaking her nose, McIntosh finished the appointment. "I went and I looked at the cow. And I was like, 'she has a [displaced abomasum], she needs surgery. ... I'm going to need to come back tomorrow.'" Then she went to have her nose reset at the ER.

Another time, when she was performing her first horse castration, the horse woke up from anesthesia and took off running. It would take three hours to track the horse down.

McIntosh and I climb into her truck at Beckett & Associates Veterinary Services in Glastonbury on a late March page 40



Animal trainer Bill Berloni, of Haddam, at the Yale University Bookstore in 2012 with "Sunny," who played "Sandy" in a production of *Annie* on Broadway. PHOTO BY PETER CASOLINO

10 Tips for Choosing the Right Dog

COURTESY OF ANIMAL TRAINER
EXTRAORDINAIRE BILL BERLONI

BY FRANK RIZZO

Bill Berloni knows dogs.

The trainer of pooches — and a wide assortment of animals for Broadway, film and TV — got his start when he was instructed to go to the pound to find a dog that could play Sandy, the faithful companion to the title character in the musical *Annie*, which was making its world premiere at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam in 1976.

That set the Haddam resident on his career path training animals for shows. He received a special Tony Award for his work and, on May 19, will be honored with an award from New York's Drama League. More locally, he and his four-legged friends will be part of Hartford Symphony Orchestra's *Playing with Dogs* concert at The Bushnell in Hartford May 20.

Berloni is also an advocate of rescue dogs and for steering folks to animal shelters when they're thinking about getting a pet.

But for many, such a visit can be intimidating, confusing or even wrong-headed.

So we asked Berloni what tips he could share to help guide people in making the right choice for them.

• **Do your homework.** "You may want a husky because you had one as a kid, but if you live in an apartment and work 10 hours a day, it won't work out." So learn about the dogs by going on the internet and doing some serious research on the animals that

are available at the shelter.

• **Profile yourself.** Think of it as "Canine Mingle," says Berloni. "If we match the right dog with the right person, it will be a seamless match and you'll both live happily ever after. But be realistic about what your abilities are. Are you an active person or inactive? Do you want short or long hair? If you are not in a place to raise an infant child, you're not in a place to raise a puppy."

• **Meet the dog in person.** This sounds obvious, but Berloni says there are organizations "where you give them your credit card and for \$350 you go pick the animal up in a parking lot somewhere in Connecticut without ever having seen the animal in person." So trust the good folks at the nonprofit shelters to guide you, he says.

• **Look for a mixed breed with a balanced temperament.** "When you go to a shelter — which is a stressful environment for animals — there are three types of dogs. Those who are not dealing with it well and who are loud and agitated. Then there are dogs who deal with stress by being introverted and scared. Chances are it will sustain those personalities. Look for the dog in the middle, an animal who comes out who is not crazy-friendly and seems to simply say, 'Hello, how are you?' That kind of dog will blossom when you get it home."

• **Watch your doggie "hello."** That moment when you first meet the dog is important, he says. "When the dog is brought to you, don't grab it immediately." The animal is likely to have been caged for a long period, he says, and a pair of clutching hands and your enthusiastic voice will

frighten the animal. "Stick your hand out, let it sniff you, let it be the one to come to you. Don't have the first meeting be all about your needs. The way we show love and affection isn't always the way dogs understand it."

• **Hit the bricks.** "When you're at the shelter, take the dog for a walk so you can see how it deals with the outside — and the counselor can see how you handle the dog, too. Any shelter that doesn't have the time to do that should be a red flag."

• **Avoid no-return places.** "Adopt from a shelter that will take the dog back if it doesn't work out. Some animal welfare groups get funding for every dog they adopt out, so if a dog is returned, they don't get the money. So they're driven more toward the numbers for funding than they are for finding the right fit. A reputable shelter will agree to take the dog back — so ask."

• **Follow your head, not your heart.** "Don't adopt a dog out of guilt because it was abused. We want to find the dog the right parent, not just any parent."

• **Adopt on a Friday.** "That way you have the weekend to start showing your dog its food, bed and bathroom. But be sure to come and go throughout the day. You don't want the dog to think you're going to be with it 24 hours a day and come Monday, think, 'Where are you?'"

• **Be patient.** "This is a till-death-do-us-part relationship. Walking into a shelter and thinking you're going to find the perfect dog is like walking into a coffee shop in Middletown and thinking you're going to find your forever love match. If it's not today, it'll be another day."

Iris and Me

HOW THE IRS & A MISBEHAVING LABRADOODLE HELPED TURN ME INTO A DOG PERSON

BY ERIK OFGANG

I love dogs but hate dog stories.

Tales of adorable pets doing adorable things seemed to me to be a lot like stories about someone else's dreams: important and meaningful to the person who had the dream, but boring and unrelated to the rest of us.

In the past, if you told me about the way your dog broke into your shoe closet, or how your cat climbed up on your bookshelf, I would have smiled politely, while looking for a way out of the conversation, hoping my half-hearted grin would mask my boredom.

That was the past.

Today, if you tell me about your dog, I'm all ears. If you have a picture in your phone, I very much want to see it. If your cat has a funny way of purring, I want to know about it. I might even have some pet stories of my own to share.

It's all the fault of the Internal Revenue Service and a ridiculously shaggy, excessively cheerful puppy named Iris ...



When it comes to places you do not want to see your name written out, a letter from the IRS is probably second only to a tombstone. But, in the winter of 2016 when I got just such a letter, I was too naive to be properly concerned. Having roughly a 12-year-old's understanding of taxes, insurance coverage and most "grownup" things, I wasn't worried, and didn't open it. For all I knew it was standard procedure for the IRS to send letters each year.

When my wife, Corinne, got home that evening, she immediately realized there was a problem. "This can't be good," she said as she opened it.

She was right.

It turned out, due to an alleged error in our filing, we owed several thousand dollars. There's never a good time to find out you owe the government money, but this was a particularly bad time.

As long as we'd been living together, Corinne had wanted a dog. But there were always reasons — good reasons — not to get one. We were getting married and there would be no one to watch her. We both were in graduate school and weren't sure where we'd be living and if it would be appropriate for a dog after we graduated. Then, I had to travel frequently while writing my first book about New England breweries, and on and on.

Eventually, my arguments against



getting a dog started becoming less sound.

"It's not a good time of year."

"What if we decide to move to England?"

"It's an election year, and, well, you know how tough politics can be on a dog."

It's not that I didn't like dogs or didn't want a dog, it's just I've always been painfully aware of how much work a dog is and felt that owning one would be an added time crunch on a lifestyle that so far hadn't left us with anything close to an abundance of spare time.

But eventually, despite my misgivings, we started tentatively planning for a dog. For me, this plan was of the "someday I will ..." variety. It joined things such as learning a foreign language, saving for my retirement, figuring out what exactly constitutes a balk in baseball, and a host of other things I fully intend to do someday, at least in theory.

Nevertheless, in that undisclosed point in the future when we did get a dog, we decided we would get a puppy. Because Corinne is allergic to most breeds, we needed a hypoallergenic dog. Another factor in this decision was that Corinne, who is a therapist, wanted to train our dog to be a therapy dog. Being hypoallergenic would allow our dog to work with more people. Unfortunately, we felt this ruled out a rescue dog and ultimately decided to get a labradoodle.

Labradoodles are a cross between a poodle and a Labrador retriever. Though the term seems to date back to the 1950s,

the type of dog became more popular in the 1980s when trainers in Australia began breeding the mix to combine the low-shedding coat of the poodle with the gentle, friendly and trainable nature of a Lab. The purpose of the crossbreed was to provide guide dogs to people who had fur and dander allergies. Some labradoodles have short Lab-like fur, but the hypoallergenic ones have longer, non-shedding hair.

Though labradoodles are not recognized as a breed by any major dog organizations, they have increased in popularity in recent years and are considered "designer dogs." As such, they come with designer price tags. In fact, these dogs have become so synonymous with wealth that in the TV show *American Housewife*, which mercilessly lampoons the perceived wealth of Westport, the main character describes the coastal Connecticut town as a place where "every idiot has a boat and a labradoodle."

As we endeavored to become a pair of those labradoodle-owning idiots, we could not find any going for less than \$2,500 in the state. We realized that much like a boat, labradoodles were firmly out of our price range. I gave up the pursuit. Corinne kept looking.

About a year later she found a reputable breeder in Pennsylvania who offered labradoodles at less than half the price the dogs went for here. Not only that, but these dogs, even I had to admit, were some of the cutest living creatures on the planet.

The puppies had a half-white and half-brown color that looked like a candy cane or a vanilla swirl in chocolate ice cream. Their fur was so fluffy they reminded me of stuffed animals or *Star Wars* characters.

My heart melted, and I agreed that if we could make the finances work, we could see if a puppy was available.

A few days later that letter from the IRS arrived.

The sum the letter said we owed was high enough that in addition to causing other hardships, it made buying a dog for at least the next year an impossibility. "We can't do it," I told Corinne. She was crushed, but couldn't argue with the math. Even I was disappointed.

Then, something happened that I'm told almost never happens.

After several meetings with our accountant, and lots of worrying, we learned the IRS was right, we had indeed filed our taxes incorrectly the previous year, but not in the way they were saying. In fact, we were entitled to a larger tax refund than we had claimed. The end result was, not only did we not owe any additional money, we were owed an additional and somewhat-sizable refund. Our accountant said it was the first time in his career that a letter from the IRS had turned into more money for his clients.

The new refund was enough to cover the cost of a puppy entirely. It was official: there were no more excuses, no more reasons not to. We were, at long last, getting a dog.

A few months later, during our eight-hour car ride to western Pennsylvania to pick up the puppy, we debated what we would name her. Options included Francois (to honor her French poodle heritage), or Coco (because of her partial chocolate coloring). But after much deliberating, we settled on naming her in honor of the government institution that

had allowed us to afford her: Iris.

Iris was born on a sprawling farm in rural Pennsylvania. When we picked her up, I stood in front of a cornfield outside the farmhouse where she had lived, and held her aloft like Simba in the beginning of *The Lion King*. Corinne snapped a picture and sent it to our family members. Due to an optical illusion and because Iris already had long, exceedingly fluffy hair, in the photo she looked much bigger than she actually was. By the time our long ride home was complete, nearly every member of our respective families had texted something along the lines of, "I thought you were getting a puppy?" My parents thought we had been hoodwinked into buying a full-grown dog at a puppy price. For the record, she weighed just 7 pounds and was little bigger than a book.

That night, one lonely yelp shattered our resolve that our dog would never sleep in the bed, and she curled up next to me and has been by my side almost unceasingly for the past eight months.

Having a dog is as much, if not more, work than I feared it would be, but I mind it less than I thought I would. When Iris wakes up at the crack of dawn, she reminds us it's nice to have one of the three occupants of our house actually be cheerful in the morning. Watching her zip through the lawn at lightning-fast speed as we play catch early each morning is a better way to spend the first 15 minutes of the day than hitting the snooze button on the alarm clock and trying desperately to come up with a viable excuse not to have to work today. When I come home at night, she runs to the door full of enthusiasm, a loving welcome that makes every day go a little quicker.

A book Corinne read describes labradoodles as "Velcro dogs" because they attach themselves to you. The description certainly fits Iris. She behaves as our four-

legged shadow, alternating between the two of us depending on who is home and who is closer to a possible food source.

Outside the house, walking around with Iris is what I imagine it would be like to go through life as Brad Pitt. Everywhere you go, you're a sensation. People, smile, point and giggle nervously as we walk by. Sometimes they approach tentatively and ask to pet her and even to take a picture with her.

Our dog-training skills leave something to be desired and Iris is a long way from taking the test to become a therapy dog. She still greets new people by jumping on her hind legs and jabbing them with her front paws like a boxer tapping a speedbag (because of her poodle heritage, she can stand on her back legs for eerily long periods of time). But her overall friendliness and cuteness make up for a lot.

Neighbors we've never spoken to have invited us over after meeting Iris on the street. At a restaurant in Portland, Maine, an admirer of Iris' started talking with Corinne and it turned out they shared a mutual friend. At Tree House Brewing Co., a world-famous brewery in Massachusetts where the number of cans each guest can buy is strictly rationed to make sure they don't sell out too quickly, a staff member told me Iris couldn't buy extra beer but was welcome to hang out at the brewery.

In short, when we go out these days, Iris is with us more often than not. So, in your travels across Connecticut while exploring breweries, restaurants, parks and other dog-friendly attractions, if you happen to see a dark-haired man with a short beard and blonde woman both in their early 30s, along with a cartoonish-looking chocolate-and white-colored dog that will most likely be misbehaving, come up and say "hi." But, as fair warning, I hope you like dog stories, because I may have a couple to share.

On the Road with a Country Vet (Cont.)

morning, still thawing from the previous week's snowstorm. She is on her way to Middlefield, where she will give a horse its yearly vaccines for Eastern and Western equine encephalitis.

There is a joke in veterinary medicine. *Question: What do you call a vet who treats only one species? Answer: A physician.* The cow that the broken-nosed McIntosh was examining had displaced one of its four stomachs, and the story cuts to the heart of what makes veterinary medicine fascinating and challenging. A farm and large-animal veterinarian must practice on the bodies of different species with different anatomies and biologies, all on the road. This past winter, McIntosh drove six hours in a snowstorm from Glastonbury to

Southington (normally a half-hour drive) to see a horse that had come down with cellulitis. She says the work here is easier than when she worked in an economically depressed region of upstate New York, where animal owners often couldn't afford necessary treatment, and many of her Amish clients didn't believe in euthanasia.

"The first really, really bad colic that I saw almost broke my heart, because the people loved the horse dearly, and she needed surgery and they couldn't afford surgery. ... They didn't want to euthanize her, they just wanted to wait and see. So it was five hours of watching her get worse and worse and worse, and there was a little 7-year-old boy involved," McIntosh says. This particular family wasn't Amish, but didn't want to

euthanize the animal. (A horse has 18 times the amount of intestine, relative to their body size, than any other animal.)

The story cuts to the heart of what McIntosh says is often misunderstood about veterinary medicine: the practice is often more about the relationship between humans and their animals than simply about a given animal's health. "So much of it is dealing with the client, because your best way of treating a disease might be whatever it is, but if the client isn't able to do that, then you have to come up with another plan." An animal, and its health or illness, is a vector for human emotions. In this way a vet doesn't get away from humans through practicing animal medicine. One might even get closer to the human condition.

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Did you know May is National Burger Month? How about that May 28 is National Hamburger Day? Clearly, the venerable burger holds a special place in May. It also holds a special place in the history of Connecticut, the Library of Congress-recognized birthplace of the burger. We decided to get in on the action and craft a list of the best burger places in our state, including casual spots, burger bars and locations serving the regional delicacy known as steamed cheeseburgers. And for the non-meat eaters, many of the places on our list offer a variety of burger options that might suit your palate. Be sure to let us know if we missed any outstanding spots by emailing editorial@connecticutmag.com.

BOBBY'S BURGER PALACE

BURGER TIME!

BY ERIK OFGANG, MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY, ALBERT YURAVICH AND MIKE WOLLSCHLAGER

LOUIS' LUNCH NEW HAVEN

According to local tradition, the "hamburger sandwich" was born here when, in 1900, a customer walked into Louis' Lunch and told owner Louis Lassen he was in a rush and wanted something he could eat on the run. Improvising, Lassen placed his blend of ground steak trimmings between two slices of toast, and the hamburger was born. Food-origin stories are notoriously difficult to prove, but no one disputes that for more than 100 years Louis' Lunch has been offering delicious sandwiches. Served between two slices of white bread instead of a burger bun and without ketchup, the emphasis for these burgers is on the flavor of the beef itself, a flavor that has left a century's worth of fans satisfied. But be warned, burgers are served medium rare as a rule, which is the way burger connoisseurs recommend them. Requests for medium-well burgers will *sometimes* be accommodated, but we've also seen them denied. And don't even think about asking for ketchup. According to Louis' website, "Cheese, tomato and onion are the only acceptable garnish."

203-562-5507, louislunch.com



LAKE ZOAR DRIVE-IN MONROE

If you've ever driven between New Haven and Danbury, odds are you've passed this unassuming restaurant on Route 34 on the banks of Lake Zoar. Famous for its burgers, the "drive-in" offers limited indoor seating but plenty of outdoor spots with lake views. The Zoar Burger is a beast with bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato, onion, pickles, ketchup, mayonnaise and mustard. Other specialty burgers include the Bobby Burger, with bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato, fried onions and roasted red peppers. The place offers a variety of hot dogs, as well as breakfast items each morning, but we've never gotten past the burgers without ordering them while perusing the menu.

203-268-8137, lakezoardrivein.com

CLAMP'S HAMBURGER STAND NEW MILFORD

This old-school, seasonal burger stand is located on a rural stretch of Route 202, a decent distance outside downtown New Milford. There's no phone, no website and hardly a sign, but word of mouth has long drawn people from far and wide to try the burgers, which have a huge local following. Simple and direct, you won't find avocado or other wild ingredients on these burgers. Instead you'll find a no-frills burger with all the classic toppings — lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles — that will more than satisfy your cravings. Similar in size and flavor to a Shake Shack burger, this is a quintessentially American grab-and-go food stand that will let you enjoy a burger in its natural habitat: the road.

BOBBY'S BURGER PALACE UNCASVILLE (MOHEGAN SUN)

We generally don't include non-Connecticut-based chains in our food roundups, but this select chain (there are fewer than 20 locations) from celebrity chef Bobby Flay offers burgers so good, so tasty, so infinitely craveable, no list of Connecticut burger spots would be complete without mentioning them. Here, medium rare means rare with pink juices flowing out of the burger and a taste that will instantly erase any trepidation you might have about eating pinkish meat. Creative burgers inspired by different regions of America include the New Mexico, with queso sauce, roasted green chilies and pickled red onions, and the Miami, which has ham, Swiss cheese, pickles, mustard and mayo. Guests can also "crunchify" any burger by adding potato chips. We recommend washing a burger down with the equally good milkshakes.

860-862-2277, bobbysburgerpalace.com

BURGERS, SHAKES & FRIES GREENWICH AND DARIEN

Perhaps inspired by the granddaddy of them all — Louis' Lunch in New Haven — the burgers at BSF are served patty-melt style on buttered, toasted white bread. But unlike at Louis', here you can customize your burger in many ways. From the choices of cheese (American, Swiss, cheddar and Gorgonzola) to "Little Fixin's" (lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, raw onions and hot peppers) to "Big Fixin's" (sautéed onions, mushrooms, bacon, chili and fried egg), you can have it your way. But the meat itself is done the BSF way: ground chuck from Bronx-based Master Purveyors is hand-pressed in house. Order a third-pound single or two-thirds-pound double. A third-pound veggie variety is also available. No BSF meal would be complete without a shake, which are crafted with house-made syrups. Flavors include vanilla, chocolate, strawberry, Neapolitan, coffee and cinnamon.

Greenwich: 203-531-7433, Darien: 203-202-9401, burgersshakesnfries.com

GOLDBURGERS NEWINGTON

Carrying on Connecticut's long legacy of burger excellence, this new-ish (it opened in 2009) burger spot features hand-crafted, made-to-order hamburger and sausage patties from proprietary blends that are ground daily at Bogner Quality Meats in Manchester. Once tasted, these big, juicy burgers leave you with a craving you can't quite kick. The signature GoldBurger is a double burger with American cheese, lettuce, onion, pickle and GoldBurger sauce. It is crowned by potato chips, which add a wonderful crunch to the sandwich. Other options include the MacPatty, a burger topped with nacho cheese, pepperjack, jalapeños and more, and the Bacon, Egg & Cheeseburger, a take on the classic breakfast sandwich with some burger thrown into the mix. These burgers taste as good as they look and sound.

860-665-0478, goldburgers.com



BURGERS,
SHAKES
& FRIES

HAPA FOOD TRUCK STAMFORD AREA

Only two burgers are served at this Stamford-based food truck, known for its combination of American street food and Asian/Pacific cuisine. But what it lacks in burger choices, it more than makes up in quality. Both start with Hapa's signature brioche buns made with a purple yam known as ube, which is traditionally used in Filipino desserts. This gives the buns a slightly sweet flavor and vibrant purple color. The Hapa Burger is made with grass-fed beef and topped with pork belly, Vermont cheddar, caramelized onion, lettuce, tomato and house aioli. The ahi burger features wild-caught yellowfin tuna, furikake crust (a dry Japanese seasoning with dried ground fish, seaweed, sesame and salt), edamame puree, caramelized onion, lettuce and tomato. Hapa also serves three types of tacos: Korean short rib, Philippine chicken adobo and crispy cauliflower. 203-998-5918, [@HapaFoodTruck](http://hapafoodtruck.com) on Twitter



HAPA FOOD TRUCK KARA JOSE

HARRY'S PLACE COLCHESTER

Approaching nearly a century in business, Harry's Place is so iconic that the whitewashed roadside stand is on the National Register of Historic Places. Cooked on a flat-top grill, burgers are served thick and juicy with more than 15 different toppings, including old standbys such as chopped and fried onions, bacon and pickles, as well as trendier add-ons such as fried eggs, chili sauce and hot cherry peppers. With meat from Noel's Market in Colchester and rolls from Nardi's Bakery in South Windsor, you can order your burger as a 4-ounce single or, if you're really hungry, an 8-ounce "stacker." Going beyond the traditional beef burger, you can also get a veggie or kielbasa burger. The hot dogs, milkshakes, onion rings and fried seafood are also big draws at this seasonal destination.

860-537-2410, harrysplaceburgers.com



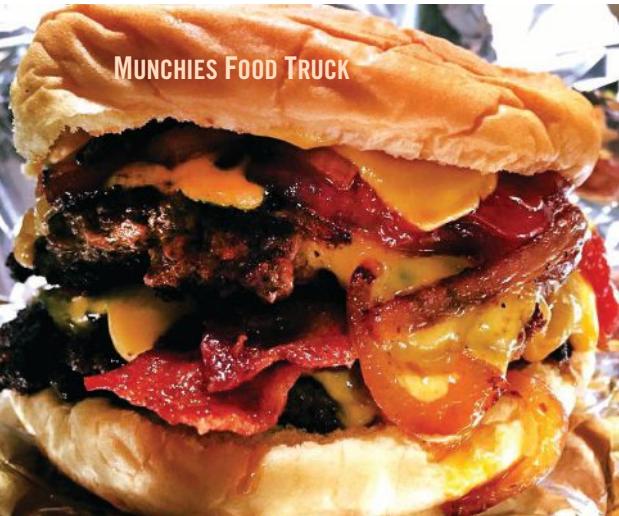
GOLDBURGERS

SHADY GLEN MANCHESTER

You'll find one of the most unique-looking (and best-tasting) burgers in the state at this 1950s-style diner. Invented back in 1949, the "Bernice Original" (named after its creator Bernice Rieg, who, along with her husband, John, owned Shady Glen) is a true original. Here's how an early newspaper ad described it: "For a Sunday snack, try one of our delicious cheeseburgers, made of pure ground beef, surrounded by a crown of crisp cheese, and served on a toasted roll." A burger experience like nothing you've had before, each one starts with a patty topped with four slices of American cheese, with the flaps of the cheese draping down onto the grill to melt and get crispy. The cheese edges are then folded up around the burger to form the chewy "crown of crisp cheese." You can even order a plate of just the plain crisp cheese. Drawing the likes of acting legends Paul Newman and James Cagney, Shady Glen has two Manchester locations: the original on East Middle Turnpike and another at the Manchester Parkade.

Original location: 860-649-4245

Manchester Parkade: 860-643-0511



MUNCHIES FOOD TRUCK WATERFORD AREA

Run by professional chef Aiman Saad and his wife, Manal, Munchies has been delighting crowds in southeastern Connecticut (and the Providence area) for several years with its burgers, chicken sandwiches and stuffed pita wraps. The signature burgers are made with certified, freshly ground black Angus beef and served on a toasted Italian roll. The Munchie Burger (cheese, pickles, red onions, ketchup and mustard) and the Munchie Burger Deluxe (fried egg, bacon, cheese, pickles, red onions, tomato, iceberg lettuce, ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise) unleash a gourmet collection of juicy, essential burger flavors that melt in the mouth. Also try the hand-cut sea salt fries, served with garlic-pepper mayo or ketchup. Frequent weekday stops for the food truck include Electric Boat and Pfizer in Groton, and branches of the Lawrence + Memorial Hospital across the southeastern part of the state. On the weekends, look for the truck at Stony Creek Brewery in Branford, Clinton Crossing Premium Outlets and other locations.

860-961-6606, munchiesfoodtruck.com

B RESTAURANTS

FAIRFIELD, GLASTONBURY, MILFORD,

SIMSBURY, STAMFORD AND WEST HARTFORD

The B in this Connecticut chain (formerly known as Plan B) stands for burgers, beer and bourbon, and all three Bs are taken seriously, especially the burgers. The burgers served at B Restaurants' six Connecticut locations (there are now three out-of-state spots, as well) are ground fresh in house twice daily, hand formed, source verified and never frozen. The Breakfast Burger features bacon, cheddar cheese, a fried egg and spiced maple aioli on a croissant, while the Baja spices things up with fresh avocado, jalapeños, tomato, jack cheese, lettuce and a chipotle sauce. There are also more standard options like the Tavern Classic, with lettuce, tomato, onion and a special sauce. Two years ago we tried The Memorial Day Cookout Burger special in Milford. The burger was an all-American dream with the patty served over cheddar and Monterey jack cheese, two onion rings and barbecue pulled pork. It still evokes fond memories.

burgersbeerbourbon.com

BURGER



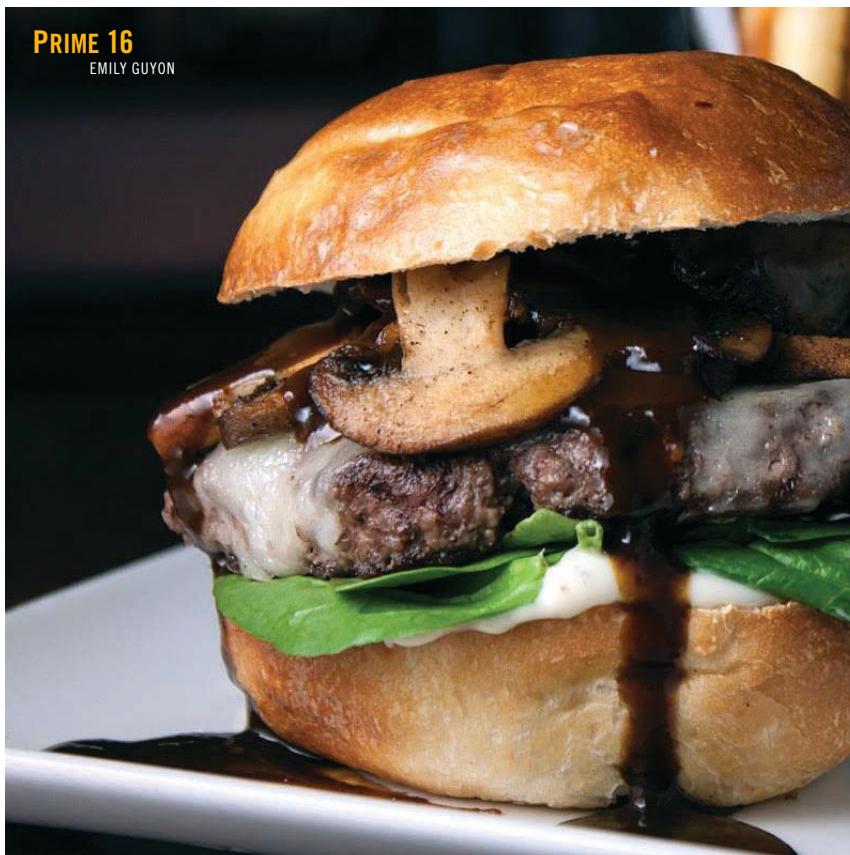
BARS

DEW DROP INN DERBY

A call on social media for burger suggestions returned several passionate recommendations for this beloved neighborhood/biker bar in Derby. These suggestions confirmed what we already knew: the food here is awesome, especially the famous chicken wings, and, more importantly for this feature, the burgers. Options include the Fast Food Burger

PRIME 16

EMILY GUYON





B RESTAURANTS

(American cheese, bacon, lettuce, tomato, pickles, mayo, mustard and ketchup) and outrageous combinations like a peanut butter and jelly burger, the Lava Burger with habanero peppers and the apple burger with crisp slices of Granny Smith apples and a caramel drizzle. A favorite is the avocado Gorgonzola bacon burger,

described by former *Connecticut Magazine* writer Kate Hartman as “at once creamy and crunchy,” with the Gorgonzola cheese providing “the perfect tangy balance to the beef.” These burgers always pair well with one of the many craft beers offered on tap.

203-735-7757, facebook.com/dewdropinnct

PRIME 16 NEW HAVEN AND ORANGE

A half-pound beef patty on a brioche roll is a fantastic way to start any burger, but it's the perfect marriage of topping combinations walloping your taste buds that elevates everything the Prime 16 folks place on your plate. You can build your own burger from a seemingly endless selection of toppings — the New Haven location offers four types of tomatoes alone — and more than 10 cheeses, but we recommend leaving your *toque blanche* at home and trusting the menu. Prime 16 also offers turkey, lamb, pork and vegetarian patties, but the standout non-beef option is the Badlands bison burger. Smothered with cheddar jack cheese, black bean corn salsa, tortilla strips and badlands sauce, this burger will have you singing the first line of “Home on the Range” between every bite.

New Haven: 203-782-1616,

Orange: 203-553-9616, prime16.com

MAX BURGER WEST HARTFORD

This slick dining destination uses certified Angus beef, from humanely raised, environmentally sustained animals that are free of antibiotics, pesticides and added

hormones. Sounds good, right? Well, the juicy, flavorful patties taste even better. Adventurous burger creations include the Inside Out (Gorgonzola stuffed, applewood-smoked bacon, grilled onion, arugula) and Blackjack (blackened, jalapeño jack cheese, roasted green chilies, guacamole, honey-chipotle onions), as well as rotating burger specials for each day of the week, including the Sgt. Peppercorn Burger, the Mohawk Farms Bison Burger and the El Diablo Burger. They pair well with sides of crispy, hand-cut fries, house-made pickles, and a bountiful, locally focused selection of craft beers. In addition to the West Hartford location, there is also a Max Burger restaurant in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, and both restaurants are part of the Max Restaurant Group, which operates several restaurants in the Greater Hartford area.

860-232-3300,
maxrestaurantgroup.com/burger

HAYWIRE BURGER BAR WESTBROOK

A buzzy bastion of burgers on the Post Road, Haywire's hand-formed, 8-ounce burgers are made from 100 percent black Angus beef, ground in house daily, and free of antibiotics and hormones. Popular burgers include the Classic with lettuce, tomato, onion, pickles and mayo, the Sunny Side with bacon, cheddar, fried egg, onion straws and garlic mayo, and the avocado ranch with cheddar, avocado, tomato, red

ON THE COVER:

A Build Your Own burger from Prime 16 with brioche roll, beef patty, grilled pineapple, butterleaf lettuce, micro greens, sliced tomato, pickles and pickled onions.



onion and ranch dressing. Don't forget about the Fuggedaboutit with shaved ham, provolone, caramelized onion, roasted red peppers and garlic mayo. Aside from beef, burger options include lamb, turkey, chicken, crab cake, salmon, portobello and falafel. All burgers are served with shoestring fries, salad greens or spicy slaw. Haywire also features a full bar with 28 taps of rotating craft beer, as well as an eclectic wine list and spiked and non-spiked milkshakes.

860-391-8479, haywireburgerbar.com

FLIPSIDE BURGERS & BAR FAIRFIELD

From sliders to specialty sirloin burgers to custom burgers, not to mention the numerous toppings, the amount of choices at this relaxed, somewhat-hidden spot just off the Post Road is enough to "flip" your lid. The sliders, available from 3-6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, come in a variety of styles, from traditional (American cheese and grilled onions) to Fairfield Fire (pepper jack cheese, roasted jalapeño trio and chipotle mayo). The 6-ounce sirloin specialty burgers get even more creative, with options such as the Thanksgiving Burger (homemade stuffing, sweet potato fries, sausage gravy and cranberry aioli), Candy Popper Burger (cream cheese, candied bacon and sweet carrot-jalapeño slaw on a pretzel bun) and the Chip & Dip Burger (Swiss cheese, caramelized onion, homemade potato chips and French onion dip). And when you factor in the customizable toppings, sauces and buns, the possibilities are seemingly endless.

203-292-8233, flipsiderestaurant.com



Steamed Burgers



One could argue that, much like the hot, buttered lobster roll, the steamed cheeseburger is Connecticut's state food. Yes, we know about New Haven apizza, but nobody else does steamed cheeseburgers. Made by steaming the meat and the cheese in purpose-built stainless steel chests until the cheese is a molten, gooey consistency, this central Connecticut specialty is said to have originated in either Middletown or Meriden, though nobody seems to be sure where, why or how.

TED'S RESTAURANT MERIDEN AND CROMWELL

One of the *grand dames* of Connecticut steamed cheeseburgers, the famous Ted's has been cranking out this local delicacy for nearly 60 years. While there is uncertainty about which institution started selling steamed cheeseburgers first, without a doubt Ted's is near or at the top of that list. The small lunch counter on Broad Street is still family owned and looks much the way it did in 1959. In 2011, Ted's opened a second location in Cromwell, and has also launched a food truck that travels around the state. "More than a restaurant; we're a friendly neighbor," Ted's website proclaims.

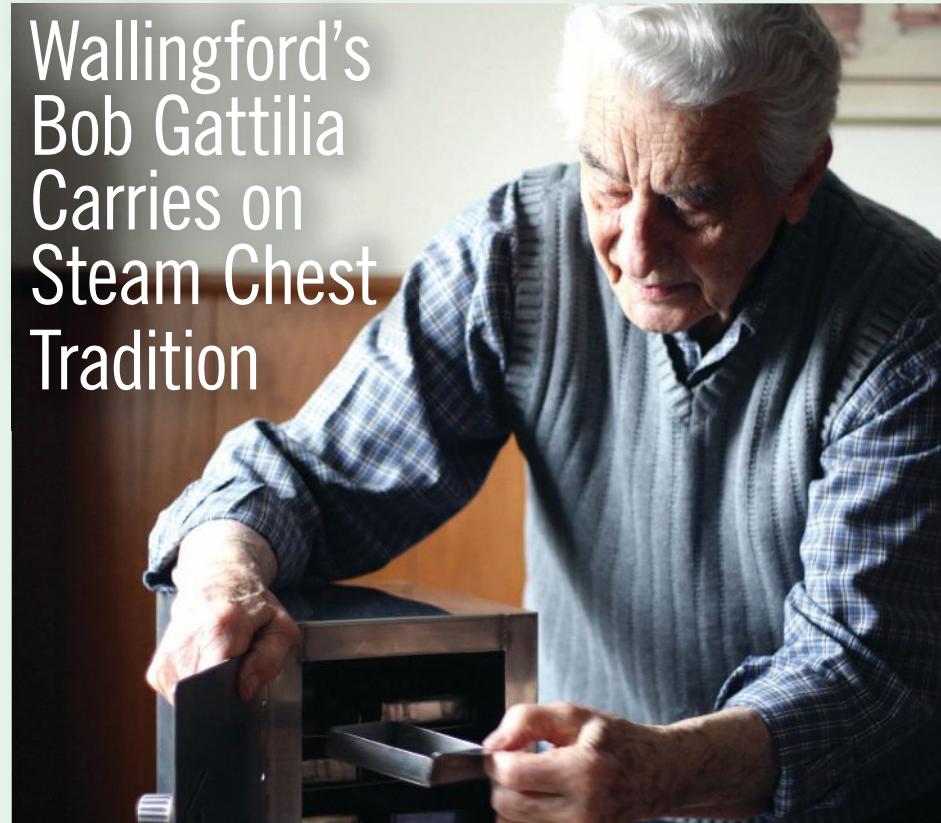
Meriden: 203-237-6660, Cromwell: 860-635-8337, tedsrestaurant.com

O'ROURKE'S DINER MIDDLETON

This North End staple is the other contender for the first to do steamed cheeseburgers. Opened in 1941 by John O'Rourke, this proudly Irish-American diner is now owned and operated by John's nephew, Brian, who has worked there since 1959. Housed in a truly beautiful chrome structure, O'Rourke's menu is more adventurous than most traditional diner fare. The steamed cheeseburger is but one element of a wild and sprawling menu. Such is the importance of O'Rourke's to the people of Middletown that when the diner was badly burned in a 2006 fire, the people of Middletown raised the money to completely renovate the interior, still maintaining its local charm and verve.

860-346-6101, orourkemiddletown.com

Wallingford's Bob Gattilia Carries on Steam Chest Tradition





K LAMAY'S

K LAMAY'S MERIDEN

A relative new kid on the block, K LaMay's began in the back kitchen of Garryowen's Pub in Meetinghouse Village in Meriden in 2006, before adding delivery to its repertoire and eventually opening its own brick-and-mortar location on East Main Street. K LaMay's prides itself on the particular type of sharp cheddar they use (the lynchpin for any steamed cheeseburger, according to true connoisseurs), sourced from Wisconsin. K LaMay's is the in-house burger at Double Play Cafe in Wallingford. The Meriden location has free delivery.

Meriden: 203-237-8326,
klamayssteamedcheeseburgers.com

The story of steamed cheeseburgers, the central Connecticut delicacy that is as adored as it is geographically confined, is also a story of small-time manufacturing and local business, of community engagement, of those things which make a place unique. Any time you eat a steamed cheeseburger in central Connecticut, there's a good chance it can trace its roots to Wallingford's Bob Gattilia, who is the owner of Daleco, the small hobby-corporation he bought in 1990 that manufactures the Burg'r Tend'r steam chests that many local joints use to make their steamed cheeseburgers.

The 87-year-old Gattilia's CV is a catalogue of the small local banks and lending institutions that used to dot our landscape, banks which were bought out, shuttered or merged into larger banks. Wallingford's First National Bank, Meriden's Puritan Bank, the Meriden Trust and Safe Deposit. All gone. In the late '80s, Gattilia lost his job, stock options and pension after a bank merger failed, and found himself unemployed at age 59.

In an unsure time, he reached back into his knowledge base as a lender, and reconnected with a Meriden man, Dale



AMERICAN STEAMED CHEESEBURGERS WALLINGFORD

Another newcomer on the scene, American Steamed makes a fantastic steamed cheeseburger, sources local sodas like Foxon Park and Avery's, and is open late nights for those needing an emergency burger after leaving the nearby bars on Wallingford's Quinnipiac Street. "Heaping" is a cliché in a lot of food writing, but nowhere does the term fit more than in describing the cheddar at American Steamed. Diners would be well advised to grab a fork for this burger. The homestyle decor in American Steamed has a comfortable, neighborhood feel, a bit like being in a neighbor's living room.

203-294-8888, americansteamed.com

Greenbacker, who was looking to sell his small manufacturing company, Daleco, which made the steam chests needed to make steamed cheeseburgers.

Gattilia bought Daleco in 1990 from Greenbacker, who had fallen ill. Gattilia taught himself the sourcing, welding and assembly of the steam chests, using the basement of his ranch house on the east side of Wallingford as his factory. Gattilia and Daleco in its various incarnations have sourced steam chests to a host of different burger joints just getting off the ground, such as K LaMay's, Ted's (before Gattilia owned the company), Sara J's in Wallingford, and American Steamed, giving someone the resources to get started, just as Gattilia did as a bank loan officer.

"I ran against the grain a little bit, because I thought my objective in life was to help everybody. And no business is in business to help everybody," Gattilia says. "One year I didn't get a raise because my superiors thought that I was returning too many of the fees for bouncing checks. I said, 'Do you realize you spend thousands and thousands of dollars on advertising, and for a miserable \$3 that I rebate, I make a friend for life?'"

Gattilia says that as the banks he worked for got bought out and merged into larger and larger entities, the attitude that allowed for a small business loan, with flexible terms, was gradually phased out. No longer would he get a loan to small Italian and Jewish delis in Wallingford and Meriden.

"There are so many names that, as you go through, that I could lay on you that are important to me," Gattilia says.

Gattilia is in the process of transferring the company over to his daughter, who lives in upstate New York, and will continue to make the steam chests with the name Burg'r Tend'r, which is a patented trademark.

The machine itself is a stainless steel chest, with a door on hinges. Inside are several trays where the meat and cheese are steamed. The whole unit sits atop a tray for water, which is then heated over a stove to create the steam. Daleco's machines cost \$329 for a home unit, and \$599 for the larger commercial unit.

"My purpose in life was to help people. In [Daleco] I was able to continue with it," Gattilia says.

burgrtendr.com

| MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY |

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the connecticut table

REVIEWS, FEATURES, RESTAURANT LISTINGS



Wine & Dine

SANDY HOOK'S NOUVEAU MONDE WINE BAR BRINGS PARIS-BISTRO FEEL, GREAT FOOD TO CONNECTICUT | BY ERIK OFGANG

PHOTOS ©JEFF KAUFMAN

AT SOME POINT DURING YOUR VISIT to Nouveau Monde Wine Bar, you will start to crave wine.

Maybe this craving will begin when you walk in and see the steampunk elegance of the main dining area, a space that feels equal parts bar, classic cafe, restaurant and offbeat library. Perhaps it will strike as you read the wine list itself, a thick document that goes on and on like a William Faulkner sentence punctuated by descriptions such as "spicy yet fruity, red wine drinkers' rose." Maybe it will

begin when your server asks, "What type of wine do you usually drink?" and you realize "IPAs" is not an acceptable response.

Or, at least, that's what happened to me.

This newfound appreciation of wine capped (or in this case, corked) a visit to the restaurant that, to put it in language a wine lover would understand, was a rich, full-bodied evening highlighted by notes of cellared ambiance, clean, bright food flavors that were anything but dry and a sweet, rich finish courtesy of a knockout dessert.

**Nouveau
Monde
Wine Bar**
Sandy Hook

To get to Nouveau Monde, which opened in April 2016, one drives through the heart of Sandy Hook, a village in Newtown. Downtown is a blink-and-you'll-miss-it area, but in the space of that blink, you'll have missed a lot.

The Pootatuck River slices through the village, cutting behind historic, red-brick buildings to provide quintessentially New England scenery and a soft soundtrack of shifting water. You can see and hear the river from the outdoor seating at Nouveau Monde and are close to a footbridge that traverses the water and is perfect

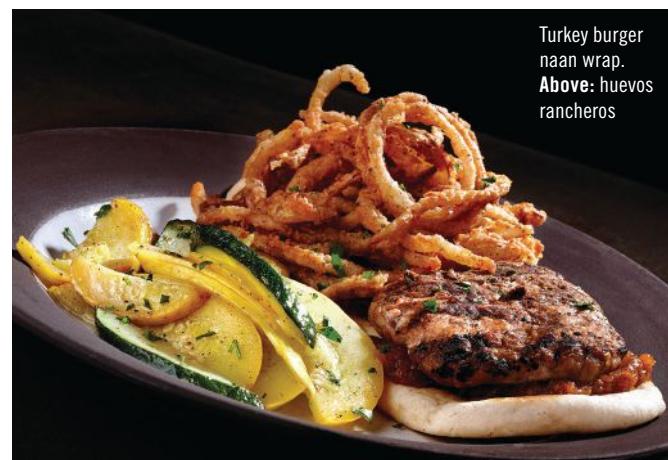
for a before- or after-dinner stroll.

Inside Nouveau Monde, the main area is a lounge-like space with a marble bar and a mix of traditional table seating as well as couches.

"We looked to create a space that was reminiscent of a 1930s Paris bistro, intermingled with a London pub and Harvard book club look, but also still clearly New England," says Bill Towne, who owns the restaurant with Peter Chang, when contacted after our visit.

Before you've fully settled into your chair, as you begin to realize this place is something approaching date-night nirvana, that thick wine list arrives. Our server suggests a glass of Malbec, the right pick both for my mood and budget (this glass was \$9, but some bottles are listed with \$100-plus price tags).

Then, the food starts arriving.



Turkey burger
naan wrap.
Above: huevos
rancheros



Left: Nouveau Monde chef Bill Towne. **Above:** pan-roasted red snapper.

Towne describes the cuisine as "refined comfort food." It draws its primary inspiration from the French school and offshoots, such as Cajun culinary traditions, but often roams farther from France with many eclectic international offerings. The menu has been designed to complement the wine, and offers options for those just snacking between glasses, as well as those looking for something heartier.

The charcuterie is a wonderful selection of salami and cured meats, and the house-made beef short rib empanadas are a must-try appetizer with soft meat cradled in a blanket of Argentinian dough and flavored with chimichurri. Also enjoyable on the appetizer front are the chicken quesadillas, a refreshingly casual dish executed well, and the fried duck dumplings, Chinese-style dumplings with a red chili soy dipping sauce. If you have room for salad, the sliced beet offering is a winner with red and golden beets, goat cheese and aged balsamic.

For entrées, the oyster po' boy was a worthy take on the Louisiana sandwich served on a French baguette. Here the sandwich is powered by cornmeal-fried oysters topped with Creole remoulade

and served alongside a wonderful potato salad. Having only a passing fondness for oysters, this would not be a dish I'd order again; after all, it is, as its name implies, big on oyster flavor. I would, however, gladly reorder the turkey burger wrapped in naan bread and served with masala spices, crunchy onions and seasonal vegetables, all coalescing into an excellent assortment of flavors.

Each entrée comes with a recommended wine pairing. Nouveau Monde, French for "New World," features old world (wines from Europe) alongside new world (wines from the Americas, Australia and New Zealand). Some guests have traveled great distances to taste hard-to-find gems at the restaurant, including wines like the Kathryn Hall Napa Valley cabernet. For non-wine drinkers, there is also a robust spirit and craft beer list.

A portion of the menu titled "Liquid Dessert" highlights an assortment of after-dinner beverages, including port, sherry, cognac and a variety of apéritif and digestive liqueurs. We forego these options in favor of a traditional solid dessert and order the Voodoo salted caramel chocolate brownie. It's a fusion of salty and sweet

flavors so close to sublime we wouldn't be surprised if dark magic was involved in its creation, but Towne explains the secret to the dish is more pedestrian. "We use dark chocolate and a bit less sugar than usual recipes, as well as a good-quality olive oil," he says. "The olive oil gives the brownie a bit of a peppery bite and a savory quality. The brownie is sliced in half, warmed, and the caramel is layered in between as well as drizzled on top. A sprinkling of kosher sea salt completes the brownie. Vanilla-bean ice cream, drizzled with more of the caramel, completes the dish."

Lingering longer than usual after a meal, we order French press coffee made with beans from Shearwater Organic Coffee Roasters. Much like the wine and food, it is an exquisitely crafted drink.

During dessert the server brings a port chosen because it pairs well with the chocolate of the brownie, compliments of Towne. He does not recognize me, or know I am writing a review, but provides it anyhow. When reminded of this later, he replies, "Doing that type of thing for our guests embodies the spirit of Nouveau Monde." It's a spirit worth toasting, regardless of what's in your glass.

Nouveau Monde Wine Bar

6 Washington Ave., Sandy Hook
203-491-2723, nouveaumondewinebar.com

Hours: Mon.-Thu. 2-10 p.m., Fri. 2-11 p.m., Sat. 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m., Sun. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; social hour: Mon.-Fri. 3-6 p.m.; brunch: Sat. & Sun. until 3 p.m.

Price range: Appetizers \$6-\$17 (beef short rib empanadas \$7, chicken quesadilla \$9, charcuterie \$9, sliced beet salad \$11); entrées \$14-\$19 (oyster po' boy \$18, turkey burger \$16); desserts \$8-\$9 (Voodoo salted caramel chocolate brownie \$9)

Wheelchair accessible

AMBIANCE A 1930s Paris bistro meets a London pub and Harvard book club, creating a European atmosphere with New England charm that is perfect for a date. Main dining area is a lounge space with a marble bar and a mix of traditional table seating as well as couches.

SERVICE Friendly, patient and helpful. Our server guided us through the robust wine list. A complimentary glass was provided for us to enjoy with dessert.

FOOD Elegant, globally inspired, but relatively casual, comfort food with strong French influences. Ingredients are fresh and locally grown when possible. Flavors are clean and intriguing.

American Comfort

FROM BRUSCHETTA TO BISCUITS, WEST HARTFORD'S PARK & OAK DELIVERS HOMESTYLE DELIGHTS

BY MARYELLEN FILLO

Chef David Borselle was a mere 28 years old when he was creating magic as head chef at Madison's tony Bar Bouchée for cooking legends like Jacques Pepin. Borselle took his expertise and French recipes to West Hartford, where he partnered up, opened Avert Brasserie and again made his "délicieux" mark in yet another French-inspired kitchen.

And then he was done.

"I was tired of working 100 hours a week; I was tired of explaining to people that French food is more than small servings and sauces," he says. "I didn't want my place to be the one for special occasions only. I needed to do what I wanted to do."

And now he is. Borselle has fulfilled his longtime dream of his own place, his own way. Welcome to Park & Oak in West Hartford.

"After Avert I thought a lot about what I wanted to do," says Borselle, whose culinary résumé includes stints at Vivo Seasonal Trattoria in the Hartford Marriott Downtown and the now-closed Elisa on the Ave in Glastonbury. "I was getting married, now we want to have a family," explains Borselle, who married NBC Connecticut anchor Heidi Voight about a year ago. "There was a lot of stress in the business partnership, and I wanted a place that was not so intense, not so formal. I wanted to reconnect with myself and my craft."

That reconnection has Borselle and his staff offering American cuisine with a Southern bent in a comfortable, family-friendly eatery where home-style cooking and a laid-back vibe rule. Located within minutes of downtown West Hartford's restaurant row, Park & Oak has top-shelf food worthy of "WeHa" pedigree. As a bonus, it sports a neighborhood camaraderie that these days too often escapes some of the area's more contemporary eateries.

Cole Garrison, who worked with Borselle at Bar Bouchée before going on to ON20 in Hartford, has reunited with his old pal and is now chef de cuisine at Park & Oak.

"The nice thing is that we cook what we want," says Borselle as he explains a tasting menu that includes bruschetta drizzled with apple and truffle honey, pan-roasted Brussels sprouts with candied bacon, and melt-in-your-mouth chicken biscuits with spicy pepper jam. "We break the rules," says Borselle. "We can serve what we want, when we want. We can experiment. We make it about the food."

Borselle and the rest of the kitchen are able to concentrate on food thanks to a business partnership with Robert and David Savin, who own several area Smashburger and Wings Over franchises. "I don't have to worry about so much of the office responsibilities, marketing, those kinds of business responsibilities that I did before," says Borselle. "I can focus on the food."

A lunch-and-dinner menu reflects Borselle's and Garrison's collective creativity. For under \$15, lunch offerings include a generous beef brisket sandwich with smoked Vermont cheddar cheese and tomato-chipotle jam. Tapping into as many local vendors as possible, Borselle's menu also includes an American Angus beef burger elevated to something special with muenster cheese and pickled vegetables and served on a Hartford Baking Co. brioche bun. Shareable small plates for under \$12 include Rhode Island-style calamari with cherry peppers, barbecue shrimp flatbread and deviled eggs with pimento cheese and crispy Parmesan.

Under-\$20 entrées feature Borselle's version of mac and cheese: pasta laced with a three-cheese sauce and studded with smoked bacon. Also offered is a Cajun-seasoned catfish with sweet potato mash, as well as what has quickly become one of the most popular items on the menu: brined

fried chicken with waffles and maple-bourbon syrup.

"We strive to serve foods that have layers of flavor," says Borselle. "Some of our menu items, like shrimp and grits and our homemade pimento cheese dip, are new to customers. But once they try them, they are hooked."

Happy hour small bites, between \$3.50 and \$6, include slow-roasted barbecue pork as the star in a spicy poutine. Other bites include hummus with avocado and pita chips and French fries dressed with rosemary salt. Specialty drinks include a spicy margarita, cocktails, and house wine for \$6 and draft beers for \$5. A late-night happy hour offers additional beer, wine and cocktail specials.

Cocktail tastings, cooking lessons and catering are also offered at Park & Oak, and Borselle plans to do even more once his new restaurant has settled in.

"I see so much potential, and we are already overwhelmed by customers who have found us and keep coming back," says Borselle. "This is the kind of place I have wanted."

Park & Oak Restaurant

14 Oakwood Ave., West Hartford
860-310-2099, parkandoakrestaurant.com

Hours: Mon. 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m., Tue.-Fri. 11:30 a.m.-midnight, Sat. noon-1 a.m., Sun. 4-11 p.m.
Wheelchair accessible



Shrimp and grits: sautéed shrimp, creamy grits, tasso ham, roasted mushrooms, lobster sauce.



Triple Threat

FORMER CONFETTI SPACE TRANSFORMED INTO BAR, COFFEEHOUSE, GOURMET-TO-GO SPOT

BY MARYELLEN FILLO

Diners have been heading to a spot on Route 10 in Plainville for more than 80 years of good eating. First it was the Mo-No-Pole, where legendary pot roast and fritters were served to generations of families, and most recently it was Confetti, offering a more contemporary menu featuring a mix of Mediterranean- and American-inspired food.

Now the place has morphed again, this time transforming into a three-way food destination that reflects the food, drink and lifestyle trends of today. It's divided into JV's Taproom, a bar/pub that spotlights steak and wood-fired pizza along with craft beers and specialty cocktails in a casual setting; Rebel Dog Coffee Co., a coffeehouse that features specialty blends, latte art and made-to-order breakfast sandwiches and pastries; and Take Away Gourmet, offering fresh, prepared dinners to go.

"It was our time to start figuring out how to ease out of the restaurant," says Confetti owner Pete Lemnotis, who, with wife Joan, owned and operated Confetti for nearly 20 years. "We don't want to work so many hours, and had an opportunity to change it up and ease ourselves out. So here we are."

Lemnotis found a good business match in Jerry Daniels and Vanessa Champagne, a soon-to-be-married couple who have

restaurant experience and agreed with Lemnotis' vision for a casual, pub-style restaurant serving quality beef dishes, pizza, salads, appetizers and an array of craft beers, wines and cocktails.

When Lemnotis launched Rebel Dog months ago as a coffee truck in front of Confetti, he realized the potential as business grew. With partner Harrison Poltorak, Lemnotis moved it inside, creating a respite for those who want artisan coffees, breakfast sandwiches and pastries, as well as a place to relax.

And for those who just can't quite bear the thought of losing some of those famed Confetti dishes, such as chicken marsala or penne alla vodka, you can still get them to go, fresh and ready to be picked up each day during business hours.

"It is a change, but it's time," says Lemnotis, explaining that white tablecloths and special-occasion dining are not what younger diners are looking for. "I have three good partners in these new businesses, and each business meets a new trend," says Lemnotis, who still offers catering and hosts special events from the restaurant and its remaining dining room.

At the taproom, menu items include various pizzas baked in a wood-burning oven, ranging from \$10 for the red-sauce New Haven pie, to \$16 for the shrimp-pesto version. The taproom still offers Confetti's

famed chopped salad, as well as chicken and veal cutlets, burgers and chop-house steaks, including the 40-ounce cowboy steak, a bone-in ribeye.

Happy hour specials include \$6 apps and \$3 Yuenglings, as well as a rotating assortment of draft beers and wines.

Over at Rebel Dog, treat yourself to lattes, mochas, macchiatos and cortados, on-tap kombucha (a fermented tea drink) and a case full of fresh pastry, acai bowls and yogurt snacks. Drinks range from \$2.65 to \$5. Breakfast sandwiches with eggs, cheeses, meats and fresh breads are also offered.

Sunday brunch is still being offered at the taproom and adjoining dining room.

"This is the restaurant business of today," says Lemnotis, who is still involved in the new venture, mentoring his partners as they prepare to give the place a new vibe. "I think it's great."

JV's Taproom

393 Farmington Ave., Plainville
860-793-8809, jvtaproom.com

Hours: Dinner Tue.-Sun. 5-9 p.m., breakfast/brunch Sun. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., happy hour Tue.-Fri. 4-6 p.m. & Sun. 5-9 p.m., extended bar service with pizza Tue.-Sat. 9-11 p.m., Mon. closed

Rebel Dog Coffee

860-992-2168, rebeldogcoffeeeco.com

Hours: Mon. 7 a.m.-2 p.m., Tue.-Sun. 7 a.m.-9 p.m.
Wheelchair accessible

THE TASTE OF HUSTLE



Clockwise from left: The culinary arts programs at Norwalk Community College (PHOTO BY RICH FREEDA), Manchester Community College and Gateway Community College



LOOKING FOR A GREAT MEAL?
STOP BY ONE OF THESE
COOKING SCHOOLS



BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

We spend a lot of time in these pages looking at established chefs, with new restaurants and kitchens, innovating and pushing out new creative energy in Connecticut's food scene. But what about the up-and-comers, those honing their craft, trying to break onto the scene? Through night classes and full-time jobs, balancing all of life's burdens, there are those trying to get their foot in the door of the food world. Here's our look at Connecticut's community college cooking school landscape.

GATEWAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Gateway offers a one-year certificate in the culinary arts, during which students can contribute and get a taste of real-life restaurant experience at Cafe Vincenzo, Gateway's open-to-the-public "lab-restaurant." Located in the south building of Gateway Community College at the corner of Church and George streets in New Haven, Cafe Vincenzo offers rotating lunch and dinner prix fixe meals. While the spring semester's meals wrap up May 2 with a Cuban menu, the dinners will start up again in the fall semester with an American theme, according to Stephen Fries, Gateway's hospitality management program coordinator (and *New Haven Register* food columnist). The lab-restaurant serves as a testing ground for students to hone their skills across a variety of elements of the culinary world, from cooking to curating a menu to serving it and managing a kitchen. New Haven is, of course, a food destination in its own right, so you can imagine that the budding chefs here take some inspiration from the high-quality cuisine in the area.

gatewayct.edu/student-life/cafe-vincenzo

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Manchester is the only community college in the state that offers a two-year associate degree in the culinary arts. In addition to the classwork and hands-on lab experience, the degree requires some 300 hours of cooperative work experience. In April, the program received the endorsement of Connecticut culinary connoisseur and radio host Faith

Middleton when she hosted MCC's 25th-anniversary *Evening of Fine Wines* event with Chris Prosperi, the head chef at Metro Bis in Simsbury. The program is accredited by the American Culinary Federation Educational Institute, and also offers a double degree in food-service management or hotel-tourism management. On May 2, the school will have its annual "Grazing Day," an all-you-can-eat buffet at noon. Check the website for the next open-kitchen lunches and dinners when students get a chance to strut their stuff to the public.

manchestercc.edu

NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

In the southwestern part of the state, proximity to New York City means the culinary competition has the potential to be a bit fiercer, the palates a bit sharper, perhaps. Norwalk Community College has a one-year culinary arts certificate program. In addition to learning the basics of food identification, food utilization, menu writing and recipe creation, students can apply much of the coursework to a hospitality-management associate degree program.

norwalk.edu

COMMUNITY CULINARY SCHOOL OF NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT

While not part of the state's community-college system, this job-training program in New Milford boasts a 96-percent job-placement rate, while all graduates receive a ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification, a nationally recognized course from the National Restaurant Association's Educational Foundation. Students at the school also gain real-world experience through the full-service catering business, with a menu featuring picnic favorites like baked ziti, chicken piccata and pulled pork. Students also prepare food for the New Milford Food Bank, and spend one day a week for a period of six weeks at an internship site.

communityculinaryschool.org

Holy Schnitzel

AUTHENTIC GERMAN CUISINE & BEER SHINES AT ALPENHAUS RESTAURANT IN NEW MILFORD

BY ERIK OFGANG

Real German food not only tastes different, it looks different, says Manuela Young.

To prove it, she asks the staff at The Alpenhaus Restaurant in New Milford, which she owns along with her husband Jeff Yenter, to bring out two types of chicken schnitzel: one pan fried the way it's supposed to be made, the other dropped in a deep fryer and scorched in boiling oil the way some restaurants looking for culinary shortcuts do it.

Schnitzels, cutlets of meat that are generally breaded and fried, are a German delicacy and a specialty at The Alpenhaus, which opened in 2014. The difference between the pan-fried and deep-fried schnitzels is striking, even to eyes untrained in the subtleties of schnitzel appearance.

The deep-fried schnitzel is one solid, almost-burnt color, while the pan-fried version has a lighter, gentler color that is less consistent in its shade, moving from light yellow to almost orange. These visuals predictably correspond to flavor: the deep-fried schnitzel is crunchier and chicken nugget-like, pleasant tasting, but nothing special, while the pan-fried schnitzel (\$18) is a dish worth ordering and savoring and is beautiful in its simplicity. The chicken is soft and tender, and the gently fried breading is present but not overpowering.

The shade of the color of the breading on a schnitzel might seem inconsequential to some, but these are details Young, a native of Germany, cares about and pays attention to while overseeing the menu at her restaurant. During a recent tasting, we found these details made a huge difference when it came to flavor.

Located in the heart of downtown New Milford, the restaurant and its downstairs bar, known as the Steinbock Tavern, have different feels. Both spaces were renovated by Yenter, a native of Vermont who worked as a cook in various restaurants for years before switching professions and becoming a builder. (His current day job is as the owner of Brookfield-based Old Mill Builders.) His handiwork is the first thing that becomes apparent to visitors. Upstairs, blue napkins are folded against wooden



Beer and schnitzel CORINNE OFGANG

tables Yenter built, and the old, exposed brick walls are highlighted and adorned with decor reminiscent of the Alps. A pair of skis hangs in one spot, a deer's head in another and several cuckoo clocks mark the hour with their signature cooing calls.

Downstairs, the atmosphere is that of a Bavarian-style beer hall, with a long wooden bar and big tables perfect for communal, casual gatherings. It's a place where classic German beers in the hefeweizen or pilsner style share tap space with beer from Connecticut breweries, and a variety of cocktails inspired by Germany are prepared. The upstairs menu is available downstairs, and because the restaurant and bar occupies a corner building on a sloping street, both floors have entrances on the ground level.

Whether dining upstairs or downstairs, be prepared for a full-flavor immersion in German cuisine.

The soft Bavarian pretzel (\$3.50) is, as its name implies, soft, with a rich, doughy wholesomeness. With the accompanying spicy mustard, the full-flavored taste makes one reluctant to call those bland,

twisted imposters served elsewhere by the same name.

Beer-battered cheese curds (\$8.50) featuring fried white cheddar and the restaurant's lager and dunkel beer batter is a perfect treat for poutine fans, though here there are no fries. The curds take center stage.

No trip to a German restaurant would be complete without potato pancakes (\$7) with applesauce. Billed on the menu as a choice "grandma would be proud you made," this seems strangely true regardless of your grandma's nationality.

If your grandmother happens to be German, another dish she would no doubt approve of is the Bavarian sauerbraten (\$20), a traditional delicacy that is one of Alpenhaus' signature dishes. It consists of thinly sliced beef marinated in a brine of red wine and vinegar. The beef is hormone and antibiotic free and arrives on the plate with a brown sauce that is slightly sweetened with caramelized sugar. As hearty a dish as any we've tried in Connecticut, it is served with red cabbage, which bursts with a bright hue reminiscent

of technicolor and has an intriguing burst of freshness in each bite.

For dessert, the options are many and the choice of a favorite difficult: a linzer tart was bursting with delicate sweetness, a slice of apple strudel went well with the scoop of ice cream it was served with, but our favorite, by a small margin, was the bread pudding.

Beyond its daily offerings, Alpenhaus hosts many events, from twice-weekly trivia nights in the Steinbock Tavern to medieval dinners where the restaurant is lit by candlelight and guests come in

historical costumes. The restaurant also hosts an annual Oktoberfest, where the street outside the restaurant is closed and there is live music and other festivities.

Prior to opening The Alpenhaus Restaurant, Young ran Cafe Little Europa, a popular German dining spot in neighboring Brookfield that closed in 2011. As popular as it was, Little Europa only sat about 30 people. With her current place, Young says her goal is "to share heart- and soul-warming German cuisine, and let our guests feel like they are in a German tavern or Alps house, hence the name, while

relaxing and socializing with friends or family members." The best part, she adds, is they won't need "a passport or tickets to fly."

The Alpenhaus Restaurant and Steinbock Tavern

59 Bank St., New Milford
860-799-5557, alpenhausct.com

Restaurant hours: Tue.-Thu. 5-9 p.m., Fri. & Sat. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sun. 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m. (brunch till 3 p.m.), closed Mon.

Tavern hours: Tue.-Thu. 4 p.m.-closing, Fri.-Sun. 11:30 a.m.-closing, closed Mon.

Restaurant wheelchair accessible, tavern has three steps

Craft Cruising

BY ERIK OFGANG

Craft260 Cask Festival May 7, Fairfield

At this beer-drinker's festival, Connecticut breweries provide tastings from two casks of beer, made from the same base beer but with different recipes. The end result is two different beers, and tasting both gives festival-goers insight into how small changes in a recipe can make big differences in the final product. 203-955-1745, craft260.com

Rising Pint Brew Fest May 13, East Hartford

Beers from more than 80 breweries will be showcased at this festival at Rentschler Field. The breweries will range from local to national to international. There will also be live music and food offered at happy hour prices. Proceeds will benefit the Folds of Honor Foundation, an organization helping families of those killed in active duty or who have returned severely wounded from duty, and Our Companions, an

organization that runs a no-kill shelter for pets in Connecticut. risingpint.com

Captain Lawrence Brewing Co. May 13, Elmsford, New York Not far from the Connecticut border in Westchester, Captain Lawrence Brewing Co. will celebrate its 10th year as a craft brewery. For \$40, guests will get to sample up to 30 beers and enjoy music, food and games. The beer list will include some of Captain Lawrence's rarest and most sought-after gems, including sour and barrel-aged beers. 914-741-2337, captainlawrencebrewing.com

Culinary Showdown at Jonathan Edwards

May 21, North Stonington Some of the best chefs in Connecticut and Rhode Island square off in a culinary challenge in which guests also participate. Attendees get to wash down the various foods with wine from Jonathan Edwards Winery. It benefits the Connecticut Farmland Trust and Rhode Island's Chef's Collaborative. 860-535-0202, jedwardswinery.com

Hop Häus Meet the Brewer Multiple dates, Southington

Thursday nights at Hop Häus are

meet-the-brewer nights. From 6 to 9 p.m., guests can chat with various brewers while sampling their beer. Or, as the bar and restaurant describes it: "Breweries come in and give you samples of beers, and hand out cool swag. It's a great time." Participating breweries in May include Branford's Stony Creek (May 4), Massachusetts' Clown Shoes (May 11) Stratford's Two Roads (May 18) and New Hampshire's White Birch (May 25). 860-276-9326, hophauscraftbeer.com

Asparagus Festival at White Silo Winery

May 20-21, Sherman Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. guests can enjoy this annual festival featuring live music, asparagus-powered food and, of course, plenty of wine, as well as the option to tour the winery. Admission is free. 860-355-0271, whitesilowinery.com

Erik Ofgang is the author of Buzzed: Beers, Booze, & Coffee Brews — Where to Enjoy the Best Craft Beverages in New England. Have a craft beverage event coming up next month? Email him at erofgang@connecticutmag.com

One Drink: Ginger Beer Espresso

THE COFFEE PEDALER, NEW HAVEN

The Coffee Pedaler is a coffee-lover's paradise. Opened in 2013 by Ryan Taylor, it specializes in pourovers, a hand-drip method of making coffee designed to accentuate the unique characteristics of the coffee beans being used. The shop also offers a variety of espresso drinks including cappuccinos, cartados and specials such as the maple latte and the annual "summer special," an espresso-infused, lime-flavored ginger beer concoction that is a refreshing and powerful alcohol-free pick-me-up available starting in May.

It was this latter special which brought us to the coffeehouse on a recent afternoon. Taylor explains he was inspired to create the drink after witnessing the "craft cocktail explosion."

His goal was to come up with a coffee-based drink that had the visual appeal of a fine cocktail. He's accomplished that.

He starts with Fever-Tree ginger beer, a high-end bottled brand of ginger beer. Then he "floats" a shot of espresso over the ginger beer, a bartending technique in which a layered drink effect is created in a glass by slowly pouring the second beverage — in this case, espresso — and letting it cascade into the glass off the back of a spoon. He tops it all off with a lime twist. The result is a drink that both looks and tastes great. Taylor says Coffee Pedaler's espresso roast tends to be a "lighter roast with a bright citrus finish to it." This flavor complements the



lime and ginger, with the bitterness of the espresso being cut by the strong flavors of ginger, and vice versa. The drink is served without sweetener, but guests can add sugar if they like. Taylor prefers it without sweetener, and we agree.

732-595-6414, facebook.com/thecoffeepedalernewhaven

ERIK OFGANG

Rise and Shine

NEW MYSTIC LOCATION FOR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH IS COMFORTABLE, BOLD

BY MICHAEL LEE-MURPHY

Breakfast can shape the day, and a breakfast spot can be a place to collect one's thoughts, run into neighbors and friends, and connect with each other about happenings in the town. Rise, a new breakfast-and-lunch spot in downtown Mystic, checks all these boxes, with fantastic food and adventurous twists on classic fare.

After opening last August, Rise has steadily attracted a stream of attention and accolades. On a recent morning visit, the small space was full — full of people, of chatter, of days getting off to a good start. Owner and chef Melody Pere is a proud Mystic local, born and raised. She says that she did a lot of traveling around the country in her younger years, "with the intention of finding somewhere else to live." But home is home. "When all was said and done, I came home and realized that this is where I wanted to be, so I made a move to really settle here," she says. "I have a great group of friends here, my family is all here, it's kind of the perfect balance between nature and civilization, not difficult to get into New York or Boston, so it's kind of an ideal central location."

Pere is a veteran of the kitchen at Mystic's Oyster Club, a less-than-one-minute walk

from Rise. "I've lived here my whole life and I've worked on [Water Street]. I've passed by this space thousands of times and I never noticed that it existed," she says. It's easy to see why she overlooked the space. Rise is located on the ground floor of a three-story building with a second-floor porch hanging over it. "One day I was walking, passed it and I kind of looked over and it caught my eye. And I said to myself if it ever becomes available, I want to look into it because I see it so clearly that it can make a really cute little restaurant or cafe. And sure enough, I was walking by weeks later and there was a big 'for lease' sign in the window, and I said to myself if I don't call, I will never forgive myself," she says.

A large renovation resulted in a sleekly designed open kitchen with a Nantucket gray color scheme that fits with the nautical-design elements that abound in Mystic. While it will take some time to develop the lived-in feel that is so essential to a good hometown eatery, the atmosphere is homey and comfortable.

The food was delicious, with a menu including standards that breakfast junkies have come to rely on. But there are twists that, once tasted, seem obvious, such as an egg sandwich with Italian sausage and provolone (\$7), and pancakes with toasted coconut, key lime cream and pistachios. (Local flour from Farm to Hearth Bakery just up the road in Salem is the secret to the pancakes, Pere says.) The latter was from the specials menu, but the curious should check back often to see what Pere comes up with. She says the signature dish at Rise (so far) is the homemade hash (\$11) made with in-house brisket.

While Rise is most certainly a breakfast-



PHOTO BY WINTER CAPLANSON

centric place (it's served any time), a selection of sandwiches, soups and salad fill that mid-day hole in your stomach. The lunch fare isn't as adventurous as the breakfast menu, with simple, classic sandwich options such as roast beef (\$10), turkey club (\$9) and grilled cheese (\$6). The coffee, likewise, is simple and classic. No espressos, lattes, macchiatos or cortados. There's just coffee (local, of course, from Mystic Coffee Roasters): hot or cold, self-serve from a hodgepodge of mugs.

Rise

10 Water St., Mystic
860-415-9519, risemysticct.com

Hours: Mon. 7 a.m.-2 p.m., Closed Tues., Wed.-Sat. 7 a.m.-2 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Wheelchair accessible

One Dish: Colombian Arepas

RUBAMBA, NEW HAVEN

Rubamba is a restaurant specializing in a variety of Latin American foods, and with locations in New Haven and Oaxaca, Mexico, Rubamba definitely scores points for authenticity. From fresh, addictive guacamole to bigger-than-you-can-hold tortas, a type of Mexican sandwich, the dishes here have become so popular at the *Connecticut Magazine* newsroom that runs to the restaurant are cause for mini-celebrations. A favorite is the Colombian-style arepas. Arepas are a round, corn-based bread with an almost pancake-like consistency, often served with a variety of meats and other ingredients. At Rubamba,



Venezuelan- and Colombian-style arepas are offered. The Venezuelan variety are smaller, more sandwich-like, while the Colombian arepas are bigger and served in a large plate with rice and beans. The ingredients — including Cuban-style pulled pork and marinated beef — are dumped on top of the arepa, which must be eaten with a fork and knife. The slightly sweet arepa is light and airy, and tastes like the love child of a corn tortilla and slice of cornbread. A recent order of the Colombian pollo arepa did not disappoint, with the arepa serving as the perfect vehicle to scoop up



the grilled chicken breast and toppings like guacamole and pico de gallo, as well as sides like sweet plantains. One serving is more than enough for a meal; to date only one member of the *Connecticut Magazine* staff has been able to eat it all in one sitting.

203-773-0032, rubamba.com

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dining guide

MAY 2017

openings

A monthly look at some of what's new and exciting on the Connecticut dining scene

YBOIKO/ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

Jesup Hall, Westport One of Connecticut's most celebrated chefs, Bill Taibe, owner of Westport's The Whelk and Kawa Ni, has opened this new restaurant. Judging by the early buzz, it is destined to be a success. For the venture, Taibe has teamed with Chef Daniel Sabia. According to ctbites.com, among the menu highlights is beef sourced from mature cows that will show up in the form of several cuts of steak, and a rotating burger menu. 203-557-6198

Donut Crazy, Westport Jesup Hall's opening isn't the only food news coming out of Westport of late. The Connecticut chain of doughnut shops, Donut Crazy, is opening in Metro-North's Westport station in the Saugatuck section of town. In addition to its signature doughnuts, the spot will offer hot espresso drinks and nitro cold-brew coffee. Commuters will also be able to call ahead to get to-go orders from Nom-Eez in Bridgeport and Match in Norwalk. 203-538-5560, donutcrazyc.com

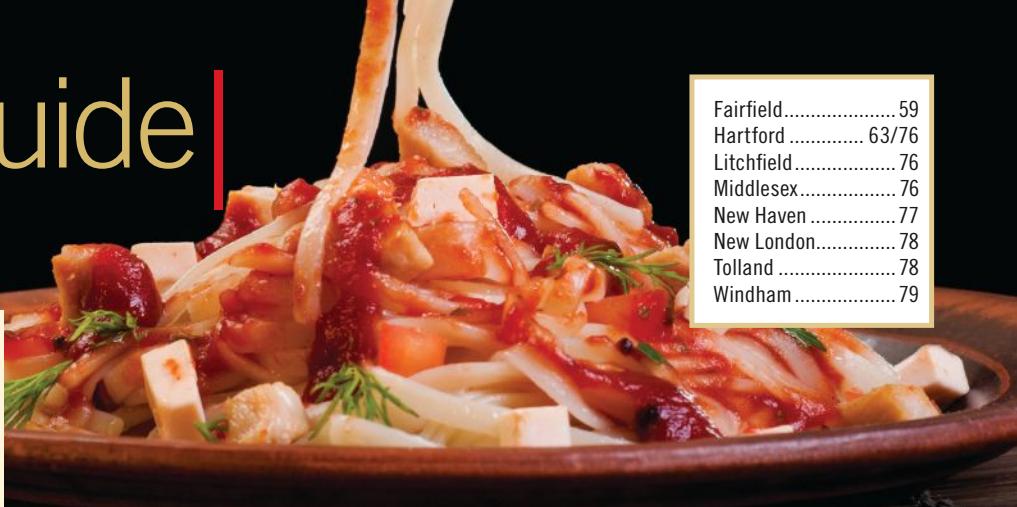
Cheek's Chicken, Manchester Steven Murray, aka "Cheeks," is a Southern-born culinary specialist with a passion for fried chicken. Last summer, after spending months researching and developing his fried chicken recipe, he opened a food truck that was so successful he was able to move into a storefront in January. At the restaurant, guests can chow down on the restaurant's signature crispy wings and chicken sandwiches as well as Southern specialties such as the chicken and waffles. 860-643-4040, cheekschicken.com

The Village Tavern, Ridgefield Opened in January by Chef Germano Minin, The Village Tavern strives to have a neighborhood feel with tavern fare. Menu highlights include appetizers such as chicken lollipops glazed with honey and garlic, and handmade toasted ravioli featuring a different cheese filling on any given night. Main courses include stewed root beer lamb shank and house-made pasta, such as the corn flour penne tossed with Parmesan cream. The cocktail program includes Prohibition-era daiquiris and sours as well as classics like the ol' Sazerac, featuring absinthe, and the Negroni featuring Old Tom gin, Campari and Carpano Antica vermouth. 203-403-3400, vtridgefield.com

H'Cue, Derby The arrival of this Texas-style BBQ joint was heralded by several billboards along Route 34. These advertisements had us daydreaming about brisket on our commute to New Haven. We've yet to stop in, but since it features post-smoked and pecan-smoked beef, pork, chicken and turkey, we're eager to give it a try. 203-516-5083, hcuebbq.com

Know of a new Connecticut restaurant?
Email Erik Ofgang at erik@connecticutmag.com.

CONNECTICUT Magazine's restaurant listings are presented as a service to our readers. Information on specialties, prices, etc., was supplied by the restaurateurs. Space limitations in this guide prevent us from describing every restaurant in the state; omission is not intended to reflect upon the quality of an establishment. The listings include restaurants we know and love, and those recommended to us by our readers. Average entrée prices are based on dinner entrées: \$ — inexpensive (under \$15); \$\$ — moderate (\$15-\$25); \$\$\$ — expensive (over \$25). This guide is updated regularly, but it is suggested that prices and hours be verified by phone. B (Breakfast); L (Lunch); D (Dinner); LS (Late Supper); SB (Sunday Brunch); E (Live Entertainment); WA (Wheelchair Access); EP = 2017 Experts' Pick; RC = 2017 Readers' Choice.



Fairfield	59
Hartford	63/76
Litchfield	76
Middlesex	76
New Haven	77
New London	78
Tolland	78
Windham	79

Fairfield County

Amba Vilas Palace • Indian • EP Dedicated to creating the finest-quality products by using only the very best ingredients from around the world. • 54 Pembroke Road, Danbury, 203-746-6425 ambavilaspalace.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

Aranci 67 • Italian • EP Excellent Sorrento-style Italian food made by the former chef at Le Fontane. Menu includes best-in-class pasta dishes. • 142 Old Ridgefield Road, Wilton, 203-587-1300 aranci67.com. Closed Sun. D, L (Mon.-Fri.), \$\$, WA

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • American • EP Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 48 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-256-9295 archiemoores.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$

Artisan • New England • EP A farm-to-table restaurant with New England-inspired seasonal cuisine. • 275 Old Post Road, Southport, 203-259-2800 artisansouthport.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Bailey's Backyard • Farm to Table • EP A farm-to-table restaurant in a polished, relaxed atmosphere. • 23 Bailey Ave., Ridgefield, 203-431-0796 baileysbackyard.com. Closed Mon. L D SB, \$\$

Bar Sugo • Italian • EP RC This beloved Italian restaurant bills itself as the place where "modern Italian meets peasant food." That philosophy shines through in its delicious offerings. • 102 Wall St., Norwalk, 203-956-7134 barsugo.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, WA

bartaco • Mexican • EP Enjoy unique taco recipes and a wide variety of tequilas on the patio at this seaside bar. • 20 Wilton Road, Westport, 203-222-8226 bartaco.com. Open daily. L D, \$, E

Basso Cafe • Mediterranean Casual fine dining establishment offering Mediterranean Latin fusion cuisine in a cozy and chic atmosphere. Bar offers a full wine, beer and craft cocktail list. • 124 New Canaan Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-6566 www.bassobistrocafe.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.), D, \$\$\$

Bernard's • French • EP RC Consistently serving perfectly executed seasonal entrées in an elegant country setting. *Wine Spectator Award of Excellence.*

• 20 West Lane, Ridgefield, 203-438-8282 bernardsridgefield.com. Closed Mon. L D SB, \$\$\$, E, WA

The Blind Rhino • American • EP Sports bar features a small but diverse and flavorful menu, plus a shuffleboard table and 27 big-screen TVs. • 15 N. Main St., Norwalk, 203-956-7243 theblindrhino.com. Open daily. L (Fri.-Sun.), D, SB, \$

Bloodroot • Vegetarian • EP RC Offers a seasonal menu that might include Vietnamese summer rolls, the Bloodroot burger and Mexican mole. • 4 Ferris St., Bridgeport, 203-576-9168 bloodroot.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues., Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Bodega Taco Bar • Mexican • EP Offers up inventive, doing-their-own-thing fare described as "Modern Mexican with an Urban Beach Vibe." • 1700 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-9590 bodegatacobar.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), SB, \$

Brasitas • Mexican • EP Latin fusion cuisine coupled with tropical decor and authentic Latin American traditions and values. • 954 E. Main St., Stamford, 203-323-3176; 430 Main Ave., Norwalk, 203-354-7329 brasitas.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$\$

Brick + Wood • Pizza/Italian • EP This artisan pizza emporium offers some of the best Napolitano-style pizza in the state. • 1275 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-939-1400 lovelifewandpizza.com. Closed Mon. L, D, \$

Butcher's Best Country Market • Deli Meats are hand-selected, trimmed and cooked, prepared take-home or in your favorite sandwich to go. Traditional and special salads are also available. • 125 S. Main St., Newtown, 203-364-0013 butchersbestmarket.com. Closed Sun. L, \$

The Capital Grille • Steak • EP RC Located in the heart of downtown Stamford this classic-style steakhouse serves dry-aged porterhouse as well as creative seafood dishes like citrus-glazed salmon. • 230 Tresser Blvd., Stamford, 203-967-0000 thecapitalgrille.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, E, WA

Casa Villa • Mexican • EP Robust, authentic Mexican cuisine served in the relaxed atmosphere normally only found south of the Rio Grande. • 182 W. Main St., Stamford, 203-323-1721 casavillarestaurant.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$, WA

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| dining guide | **fairfield county**

Cask Republic • American • EP Serious chef-crafted American fare as well as creative interpretations of globally inspired dishes with an inviting and fun vibe. • 99 Washington St., #2, Norwalk, 203-354-0163; 191 Summer St., Stamford, 203-348-2275 caskrepublic.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Char • American • EP Contemporary American restaurant that has a menu that changes seasonally and sources local meats, produce and cheese whenever possible. • 2 South Water St., Greenwich, 203-900-1100 charct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.- Fri.) D, \$\$

Coalhouse Pizza • Pizza • EP Besides coal-fired pizza, the jazz-themed menu also includes wraps, burgers and plates, and an extensive draft selection. • 85 High Ridge Road, Stamford, 203-977-7700 coalhousepizza.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Coromandel Cuisine of India • Indian • EP Wide range of tasty Indian fare is served in a small, tastefully done space. • 25-11 Old Kings Hwy. N., Darien, 203-662-1213; 316 South Main St., Newtown, 203-426-7143; 68 Broad St., Stamford, 203-964-1010; 17 Pease Ave., Southport, 203-259-1213 coromandalcuisine.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Crave • American • EP RC Dishes like eggplant stack, fish tacos, the Crave 52 Burger, meatball and lobster ravioli are served in an atmosphere that provides a seamless extension from elegant dining into a stylish, attractive bar setting. • 52 Sanford St., Fairfield, 203-292-8080 crave52.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Dinosaur Bar-B-Que • Barbecue Offers a menu firmly rooted in the traditions of Southern barbecue but with its own distinct character. • 845 Canal St., Stamford, 203-517-3272 dinosaurbarbecue.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Elm • American World-class chef Brian Lewis makes culinary magic here — with the freshest local, top-quality ingredients — in an elegant minimalist environment. And there's a great Sunday brunch. • 73 Elm St., New Canaan, 203-920-4994 elmrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. D SB, \$\$, WA

F.I.S.H. • Seafood • EP This mod-elegant restaurant features a variety of excellently prepared seafood favorites and a special section of the menu that lets you choose your fish and how it's cooked. • 245 Bedford St., Stamford, 203-724-9300 fishstamford.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Thurs.) D, \$\$, WA

Fat Cat Pie Co. • Pizza A community-based wine-pub featuring small-production wine, craft American beer, thin-crust organic pizza, generous organic salads, artisanal cheese and charcuterie, house-made delectable desserts and a true espresso bar. • 9-11 Wall St., Norwalk, 203-523-0389 fatcatpie.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$, E, WA

The Fez • Moroccan • EP In addition to excellent Moroccan fare—with small plates (kebabs, falafel salad) and large (slow-braised lamb shank, swordfish tagine)—The Fez serves up equally as eclectic live music nightly. • 227 Summer St., Stamford, 203-324-3391 thefezi.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$, E



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Fortina • Italian Enjoy the award-winning Luigi Bianco pizza, cooked in wood-fire ovens, on the rooftop dining area. • 120 Washington Blvd., Stamford, 203-703-9080 fortinapizza.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, SB, \$\$

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 238 Commerce Drive, Fairfield, 203-333-7373; 59 Federal Road, Danbury, 203-790-7373 pepesizzeria.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Geronimo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • Southwestern Fusion • EP Mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 2070 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-955-1643 geronimobarandgrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$

Harlan Publick • American Blend of restaurant, tap room and patio in the heart of downtown SoNo. • 127 Washington St., Norwalk, 203-831-0727 harlanpublick.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D SB, \$\$

The Hideaway • Pub • EP Seafood apps, Southwestern specialties and a bar with an extensive beer selection and late-night pub menu, plus trivia on Wednesdays and live music every weekend. • 30 Grove St., Ridgefield, 203-438-7676 thehideawayridgefield.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, E




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Homestead Inn — Thomas Henkelmann • **French** Upscale French restaurant features impeccable service, comfortable surroundings, an extensive wine list and creative French food. • 420 Field Point Road, Greenwich, 203-869-7500 homesteadinn.com/thomas-henkelmann. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$\$, WA

Hoodoo Brown BBQ • **American** • **EP RC** This laid-back barbecue bar and restaurant features a delicious blend of Texas, Kansas City, Carolina and other styles that will leave you craving more. • 967 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, 203-438-6033 hoodoobrownbbq.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$, WA

Ibiza Tapas Danbury • **Tapas** • **EP** Surround yourself with the sights, sounds, flavors and scents of Spain, with both hot and cold as well as traditional and modern tapas. • 93 Mill Plain Road, Danbury, 203-616-5731 ibiza-tapas.com. Closed Mon. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$, WA

Ichiro • **Sushi** • **EP** Ichiro offers a combination of Asian fusion, sushi and hibachi entrees. Enjoy the full-service bar and the shows put on by the hibachi chef. • 69 Newtown Road, Danbury, 203-792-8881 ichirodanbury.com. Open daily. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

Joseph's Steakhouse • **American** • **EP** Known for a New York-style steakhouse experience with gems such as prime dry-aged beef. • 360 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-337-9944 josephssteakhouse.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Kawa Ni • **Asian** • **EP** A creative interpretation of pan-Asian cuisine and culture, styled after a Japanese pub and using locally grown ingredients. • 19A Bridge Square, Westport, 203-557-8775 kawaniwestport.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.) D LS (Tues.-Sat.), \$\$

Kotobuki Japanese Cuisine • **Sushi** • **EP** Rated "one of the best sushi restaurants" by Zagat for the past two decades, Kotobuki offers high-quality, classically prepared and authentic Japanese food. • 457 Summer St., Stamford, 203-359-4747 kotobukijapaneserestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$\$

l'escalier • **French** • **EP** A stylish, romantic dining room overlooking Greenwich Harbor that serves superb Provençal cuisine. • 500 Steamboat Road, Delamar Greenwich Harbor, Greenwich, 203-661-4600 lescalerestaurant.com. Open daily. B L D LS SB, \$\$, WA

Liana's Trattoria • **Italian** • **EP** Traditional Italian cuisine served in the atmosphere of an authentic Italian bistro. • 591 Tunxis Hill Road, Fairfield, 203-368-1235. Closed Sun.-Mon. D, \$\$\$, WA

Little Barn • **Pub** • **EP** Burgers, tacos and farm-fresh salads, served up in a casual atmosphere with an outdoor patio and fireplace. • 1050 Post Road E., Westport, 203-557-8501 littlebarnct.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, E

Little Pub • **American** • **EP** Great food, generous drinks, seasonal menus and a lively pub atmosphere where you'll feel right at home. • 59 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, 203-544-9222 littlepub.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Local Kitchen and Bar • **American** • **EP** Craft beer is the name of the game here with more than 30 lines including rare local, national and international gems. There is also a full menu of classic American cuisine. • 68 Washington St., Norwalk, 203-957-3352; 85 Mill Plain Road, Fairfield, 203-955-1919 sonolocal.com, fairfieldlocal.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

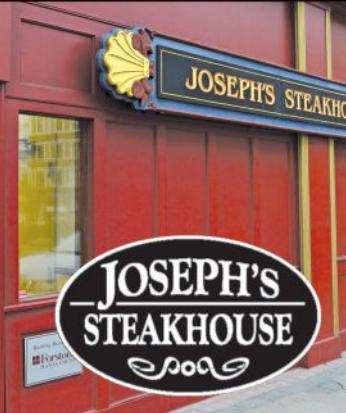
Luc's Cafe • **French** • **EP** An authentic French bistro offering non-stop service from 11 a.m. on, with terrace dining available in the warmer months. • 3 Big Shop Lane, Ridgefield, 203-894-8522 lucscafe.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$\$\$, E

Mama's Boy • **Southern** • **EP** A "southern table and refuge" with favorites from classic shrimp and grits to country-fried game hen. Brunch available Sat.-Sun. • 19 N Water St., South Norwalk, 203-956-7171 mamasboyc.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.), D (Mon.-Sat.), SB, \$\$\$

Match • **American** • **EP RC** The farm-fresh, seasonal menu at this upscale SONO restaurant changes daily but always offers something intriguing. • 98 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-852-1088 matchsono.com. Open daily. D L (Wed.-Fri.), \$\$

Mecha Noodle Bar • **Asian** • **EP RC** Serves some of Asia's most comforting dishes, from Vietnamese pho to Japanese ramen and riffs on food that can be found in the streets of Southeast Asia. • 116 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-295-8718; 1215 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-8222 mechanoodlebar.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Mezon • **Mexican** • **EP RC** An inventive fusion of Spanish, Latin American, and Caribbean-inspired dishes to transport you to a time of tradition, passion, flavor and soul. • 56 Mill Plain Road, Danbury, 203-748-0875 mezonct.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$



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|- dining guide | **fairfield county**

Mill Street Bar & Table, Greenwich • American • EP

Seasonally driven menu from the Northeast land and sea, with two dining rooms, an oyster bar, a full-service bar, comfy cocktail lounge and heated patio. • 230 Mill St., Greenwich, 203-813-3323 millstreetct.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L D, \$\$\$

Paloma • Latin • EP High-energy Latin-inspired restaurant and gathering place located in Stamford's Harbor Point neighborhood overlooking the marina. • 15 Harbor Point Road, Stamford, 203-998-7500 palomagrill.com. Closed Mon. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Parallel Post • Farm to Table Seasonally inspired menu features local ingredients prepared with contemporary, healthy techniques. • 180 Hawley Lane, Trumbull, 203-380-6380 parallelpostrestaurant.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Pho Saigon, Bridgeport • Vietnamese • EP The unpretentious, out-of-the-way gem serves up generous portions of authentic, traditional pho. • 1275 Iranistan Ave., Bridgeport, 203-334-8812. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Pho Vietnam • Vietnamese • EP RC A family-owned restaurant serving authentic Vietnamese food with fresh produce, choice meats and seafood. • 56 Padanaram Road, Danbury, 203-743-6049 rivebistro.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Pink Sumo • Sushi • EP RC Specializes in world-class sushi and sashimi, using only the freshest seafood and ingredients. • 4 Church Lane, Westport, 203-557-8080 pinksumoact.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Positano Ristorante • Italian This restaurant has been owned and operated by the Scarpati family for more than 15 years. Owner and chef Giuseppe Scarpati was born on the island of Ponza, Italy, and his cuisine focuses on all-natural cooking with fresh fishes, meats, fruits, vegetables, and aromatic herbs. • 27 Powers Court, Westport, 203-454-4922 positanorestaurantwestport.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E

Redding Roadhouse • American This cozy, classic-style pub features seafood and meat classics as well as an assortment of artisan cheeses, a good beer list and specialty cocktails. • 406 Redding Road, Redding, 203-938-3388 thereddingroadhouse.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Rizzuto's • Italian A warm urban environment with a rustic Italian menu. Offerings include an extensive antipasti selection, creative small plates, house-made pasta and wood-fired Neapolitan pizza. • 6 Stony Hill Road, Bethel, 203-790-4444; 540 Riverside Ave., Westport, 203-221-1002 rizzutos.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Roberto's • Italian • RC Excellent Italian food with attentive service, plus catering and a full-service banquet facility. • 505 Main St., Monroe, 203-268-5723 robertosmonroe.com. Open daily. L (Sun.), D, \$\$

Rothbard Ale + Larder • Gastropub Offers dishes and drinks inspired by the Central European regions, including Alsace, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. • 90 Post Road E., Westport, 203-557-9666 rothbardct.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L (Fri.-Sun.), D, \$

Sal e Pepe Contemporary Italian Bistro • Northern Italian • RC Offers superb cuisine with a contemporary flair, from fresh pastas and sauces to unique specials and classics with a modern twist. • 97 South Main St., Newtown, 203-426-0805 salepeperestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

The Schoolhouse at Cannondale • American • EP With the motto "Fine. Fresh. Simple," the owners seek out the best sources of ingredients and treat them simply and with respect. • 34 Cannon Road, Wilton, 203-834-9816 schoolhouseatcannondale.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri., Sat) D (Wed., Fri., Sat.) SB, \$\$\$

Shiki Hana • Sushi • EP This low-key restaurant offers a variety of sushi rolls, hibachi dishes and Japanese bento meals. • 222 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-259-5950 shikihanafairfield.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$

The Sitting Duck Tavern • American Neighborhood tavern committed to using regionally and locally grown produce and products. • 3694 Main St., Stratford, 203-873-0871 sittingducktavern.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$

South End • American • EP South End's food philosophy is a simple one; uncomplicated, seasonal, flavorful food, with an atmosphere that is casual. • 36 Pine St., New Canaan, 203-966-5200 southendnewcanaan.com. Open daily. L (Wed.-Sat.), D SB, \$\$\$, E

The Spinning Wheel • American • RC Enjoy a quintessentially New England-inspired menu with seasonal specials, local and homegrown accents, and modern adaptations of traditional comfort dishes. This classic style pub has 12 types of beer on tap, a rum-inspired drink menu and is housed within a newly renovated historic saltbox style house that dates back to 1742. • 109 Black Rock Tpke., Redding, 203-664-4000 swredding.com. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

The Spread • American • EP The owners are industry leaders in culinary deviance and solutions, and are focused on delivering great dining experiences. • 70 N Main St., Norwalk, 203-939-1111 thespreadsono.com. Open daily. D, SB, \$\$

Stanziato's • Pizza • EP Wood-fired pizza made using organic, seasonal ingredients from local farms and artisans. • 35 Lake Ave. Ext., Danbury, 203-885-1057 stanziatos.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, \$, WA

Tazza Osteria & Bar • Italian Try favorites like grilled octopus, hanger steak, meatballs and brick oven pizza in a modern and trendy atmosphere. • 116 Post Road, Fairfield, 203-292-8810 tazzaosteriabar.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$

Tequila Mockingbird • Mexican The food here is made with traditional ingredients when possible, including imported chiles. Tequila is taken seriously as well, with bartenders receiving tequila training in Mexico. • 6 Forest St., New Canaan, 203-966-2222 tequilamockingbirdnc.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

TerraSole • Italian This cheese and wine bar features authentic Italian cuisine, with locally grown and, whenever possible, organic produce, fish and meat as well as a 200-plus bottle wine list. • 3 Big Shop Lane., Ridgefield, 203-438-5352 terrasoneridgefield.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Thali • Indian • EP The ambience in each of Chef Prasad Chirnomula's restaurants is unique, but what ultimately distinguishes them is the flavorful food. • 296 Ethan Allen Hwy., Ridgefield, 203-894-1080 thali-ridgefield.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), SB, \$\$

Toro • Sushi • EP RC Japanese and Asian cuisine with a modern flair and a hijabi chef to provide live entertainment. • 28 Church Hill Road, Newtown, 203-364-0099 tororestaurantnewtown.com. Open daily. L D LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

Valencia Luncheria • Latin American • EP Venezuelan cuisine served up in large portions in a bright, relaxed atmosphere. • 164 Main St., Norwalk, 203-846-8009 valencialuncheria.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Vespa • Italian • EP Upscale Italian dining with a frequently changing menu that utilizes local ingredients. • 2 Post Road, Westport, 203-557-9057 vespawestport.com. Closed Mon. D (Mon.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

Wafu Asian Bistro • Asian Upscale dining with a frequently changing menu that utilizes local ingredients. • 3671 Post Road, Southport, 203-254-2288 wafuasianbistro.com. Open daily. L D, \$

Walrus + Carpenter • Barbecue • EP Sink your teeth into the barbecue offered at this sleek eatery in the Black Rock section of Bridgeport. The customer favorite is the Notorious P.I.G. • 2895 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, 203-333-2733 walruscarpenterct.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Washington Prime • American • EP The land and sea menu has elements of Americana with cross-cultural influences. The restaurant also boasts an impressive beverage program. • 141 Washington St., South Norwalk, 203-857-1314 washingtonprimect.com. Open daily. L (Wed.-Sun.) D, \$\$, WA

The Whelk • Seafood • EP Upmarket, sophisticated seafood with a distinct culinary voice. • 575 Riverside Ave., Westport, 203-557-0902 thewhelkwestport.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Tues.-Thurs.), D, \$\$, WA

Hartford County

Apricots Restaurant & Pub • American • EP Contemporary cuisine featuring regional American products as well as a selection of items from Europe and the Far East. • 1593 Farmington Ave., Farmington, 860-673-5405 apricotsrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Artisanal Burger Company • American Gourmet burgers are the specialty here, but they are only the beginning of the culinary delights diners will experience. • 1436 Pleasant Valley Road, Manchester, 860-644-0046 artisanalburgercompany.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

@the Barn • American This 170-seat, 4,000-square-foot ultra-sleek steakhouse and wine bar features multiple dining areas, steaks, seafood, small plates and a wine list selected by a certified sommelier, as well as a wide array of martinis, specialty cocktails and craft beers. • 17R E. Granby Road, Granby, 860-413-3888 atthebamgranby.com. Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sun.) D, \$\$, WA

Avért Brasserie • French • EP Owned by two chefs who in recent years have been making the Connecticut foodie world sit up and take notice, this restaurant offers beautiful food combined with imagination, perfectionism and zest. • 35 LaSalle Road, West Hartford, 860-904-6240 avertbrasserie.com. Open daily. L D, LS, \$\$, WA

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • Spanish Mediterranean • EP Barcelona's newest location in a popular line of hip, European-style restaurants. • 971 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-218-2100 barcelonawinebar.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$, E, WA

Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue • Barbecue • EP Let your inner bear roar at these finger-lickin' good Kansas City-style barbecue joints owned by competitive eating champion Jamie McDonald. • 89 Arch St., Hartford, 860-724-3100; 2152 Poquonock Ave., Windsor, 860-999-3834 bearssbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Besito • Mexican • EP Besito (in English, "little kiss") offers up authentic Mexican food and over 60 world-class tequilas in an atmosphere of old, rustic Mexico. • 46 South Main St., West Hartford, 860-233-2500 besitomexican.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$

Bricco Trattoria • Italian • EP Creates the feel of an Italian farm house or vineyard home, with simple, fresh and delicious food and time-honored recipes. • 124 Hebron Ave., Glastonbury, 860-659-0220 billygrant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, \$

Carbone's Kitchen • Italian Established in 2012, this casual-dining little brother to Carbone's Ristorante uses fresh and local ingredients to prepare old-school Italian classics. • 6 Wintonbury Mall, Bloomfield, 860-904-2111 carboneskitchen.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, WA

Carbone's Ristorante • Italian This old-school, fine-dining Italian restaurant was established in 1938 and has survived as long as it has for a reason. Dishes include lobster risotto, grilled veal chop and eggplant, chicken and veal parmigiano. • 588 Franklin Ave., Hartford, 860-296-9646 carbonesct.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, \$\$, WA

Cavey's Restaurant • Italian / French Choose from handmade pasta and house-cured salami in the Northern Italian restaurant upstairs, or soufflé and buttery foie gras in the luxurious French restaurant downstairs. Enjoy a cocktail with some light jazz in a casual lounge while you decide. • 45 E. Center St., Manchester, 860-463-2751 caveyrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$, E, WA

Confetti • Italian Offers Italian-American cuisine with a celebratory vibe. Also caters and operates the Big Red Truck food truck. • 393 Farmington Ave., Plainville, 860-793-8809 idineconfetti.com. Closed Mon. & Tues. D (Wed.-Sun.) SB, \$\$

The Corner Pug • Irish Pub • EP Classic favorites at this pub-themed pub include shepherd's pie, hot grilled Reubens, creamy chicken pot pies with flaky crusts, and authentic English fish and chips. • 1046 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-231-0241 cornerpug.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$

Costa del Sol • Spanish/Mediterranean • EP Galician restauranteur Jose "Pepe" Feijoo incorporates the old and the new, breathing new life into a cuisine rich in Spanish heritage, with a focus on tapas and seafood. Tapas bar, sun rooms, patio, private function room and a small market. • 901 Wethersfield Ave., Hartford, 860-296-1714 costadelosolhartford.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$\$, \$

The Cottage • American • EP Family-owned, European-style restaurant offers unique, seasonally inspired dishes and a wide selection of wines, martinis and cocktails. • 427 Farmington Ave., Plainville, 860-793-8888 cottagerestaurantandcafe.com. Closed Sun. & Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$

East Side Restaurant • German Old World-style restaurant specializing in German food, bier and culture in an authentic Bavarian atmosphere. • 131 Dwight St., New Britain, 860-223-1188 eastsidelerestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Feng Asian Bistro • Asian Features a broad range of elegant Southeast Asian dishes spanning the Pacific Rim, with a fusion of East and West in every plate. • 93 Asylum St., Hartford, 860-549-3364 fengrestaurant.com/feng-hartford. Closed Sun. L D LS, \$\$\$

Firebox • New American • EP Firebox boasts a seasonal, Connecticut farm-inspired menu including seared Stonington scallops and Connecticut farm-raised lamb. • 539 Broad St., Hartford, 860-246-1222 fireboxrestaurant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, E, WA

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar • American • EP Premier destination for prime meats and chops, fresh fish and poultry, with a sophisticated wine list. • Blue Back Square, 44 South Main St., West Hartford, 860-676-7333 flemingssteakhouse.com. Open daily. D, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, any pie here is worth the wait. • 1148 New Britain Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-7373; 221 Buckland Hills Drive, Manchester, 860-644-7333 pepesizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$, WA

GoldBurgers • Burgers • EP The big (with a capital B) juicy specialties at GoldBurgers are all made with locally sourced beef and include the venue's namesake, the GoldBurger, a monster of a burger made with two patties and crowned by potato chips. • 1096 Main St., Newington, 860-665-0478. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

J. Gilbert's • Steak • EP Quality ingredients and honest food, like prime wood-fired steaks and seafood, in a luxe, yet warm, atmosphere. • 185 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, 860-659-0409 jgilberts.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

Max Downtown • American • EP Features global cuisine, chophouse classics, a fine wine list and lighter fare in the tavern. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 185 Asylum St., Hartford, 860-522-2530 maxrestaurantgroup.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$, WA

Max Fish • Seafood • EP Lively, upscale fish house serving a daily selection of fresh seafood and great steaks. The Shark Bar is more casual, offering lighter fare and Max Classics in an up-tempo environment. • 110 Glastonbury Blvd., Glastonbury, 860-652-3474 maxfishct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$

Max's Oyster Bar • Seafood • EP Modern renditions of classic American seafood in an atmosphere reminiscent of a big-city oyster bar. • 964 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-236-6299 maxrestaurantgroup.com/oyster. Open daily. L, D, LS (Sat.), \$\$

Metro Bis • American • EP It has a lovely new home at Simsbury 1820 House, but the focus hasn't changed — classically grounded innovation, seasonally oriented and ever open to a playful riff or two. • 731 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, 860-651-1908 metrobis.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$\$, WA

The Mill on the River • American Pan-seared Chilean sea bass and pork chop Milanese are tops at this former gristmill. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 989 Ellington Road, South Windsor, 860-289-7929 themillontherriver.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Millwright's Restaurant and Tavern • American • EP Tyler Anderson dazzled us for years at The Copper Beech Inn. Now, he's wowing all comers at this sparkling restaurant. • 77 West St., Simsbury, 860-651-5500 millwrightsrestaurant.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$, WA

Monte Alban • Mexican • EP Low-key spot for Mexican staples like tacos, burritos and enchiladas, plus breakfast and outdoor tables. • 531 Farmington Ave., Hartford, 860-523-7243 montealbanhartford.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$

Murasaki • Sushi • EP Well known for its outstanding sushi and sashimi creations, Murasaki also offers a selection of American foods served in the Japanese style. • 23 LaSalle Road, West Hartford, 860-236-7622 murasakijapaneserestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Sat.), D, \$\$

ON20 • Contemporary French / American • EP Savor panoramic city views and sophisticated atmosphere along with sumptuous seasonal cuisine. • 400 Columbus Blvd., 20th Floor, Hartford, 860-722-5161 ontwenty.com. L (Mon.-Fri.) D (Wed.-Sat.) L D, \$\$, E

Pho 501 • Asian • EP Dedicated to keeping it simple, with the best soups and authentic Vietnamese family recipes. • 501 Main St., East Hartford, 860-569-3700 pho501.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$

Plan B Burger Bar • Burgers Gourmet burgers and a wide selection of beers and bourbons. • 102 Hebron Ave. #6, Glastonbury, 860-430-9737 planbburger.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Republic • Gastropub • EP Handcrafted beers, boutique wines and small-batch bourbons are offered at this high-end pub. • 39 Jerome Ave., Bloomfield, 860-216-5852 republicct.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D LS, \$\$

CONTINUES ON PAGE 76

BUILDING a GREAT LIFE

Only On
cptv

Premieres Thursday, May 11 at 8 p.m.

Repeats Sunday, May 21 at 6 p.m. and Monday, June 19 at 10 p.m.



Building A Great Life examines the case for closing Connecticut's state institutions that provide congregate residential care for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities, many with complex needs who receive a high level of state care and support. Could cost savings realized by closing the Southbury Training School and three regional centers be significant enough to ensure help for the 2,000 Connecticut families on a Department of Developmental Services waiting list for state supports? The one hour documentary explores how the notion of closing state institutions in favor of community living for persons with intellectual disabilities is both a moral and fiscal debate.

This program is
funded by:



CTCDD
Connecticut Council on
Developmental Disabilities

UCONN
UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
EXCELLENCE IN
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES



Building a Great Life is a CPTV Partnership Production.
For more information, visit cptv.org/buildingagreatlife.

What's On!

CONNECTICUT PUBLIC BROADCASTING NETWORK

05.2017

CPTV | WNPR | CPBN.ORG

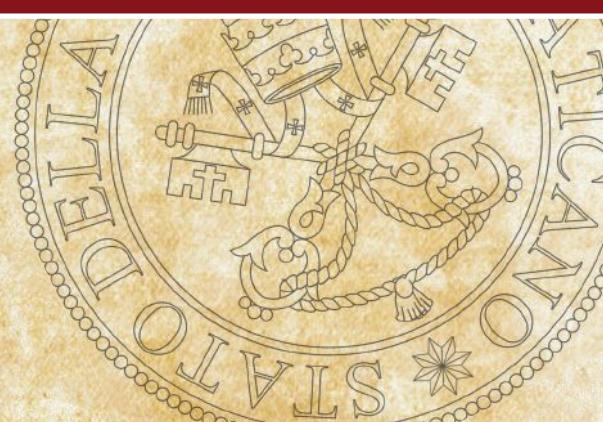
Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story

It began in Torino, Italy.
There, a young bride named
Carla fell in love with the art of pasta.

Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story

Premieres Thursday, June 22 at 8:30 p.m.

Only On
cptv
www.cptv.org





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN), home of Connecticut Public Television (CPTV) and Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR), has always valued working with community partners to bring our audiences timely original content focused on issues that are important to them. That's why we are thrilled to be presenting a number of new Partnership Productions this spring.

In April, we joined with AARP Connecticut for *Understanding Paid Family Leave*, part of our *Life Lessons* series of live events broadcast on CPTV and streamed on CPTV.org. *Understanding Paid Family Leave* explored what paid family leave entails, and what it could mean to Connecticut families if implemented in our state.

April also brought a partnership with the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) called *Unlearning: Breaking Bias. Building Community.*, a program examining whether prejudices can be "unlearned," and how inclusive and just communities can be built.

This May, CPTV will air additional exciting Partnership Productions. On Thursday, May 4 at 8 p.m., tune in to CPTV – or join the live studio audience – for another *Life Lessons* presentation: *A Vibrant Retirement*. This program, presented in partnership with Duncaster, features a discussion about the myths and realities of retirement.

Then, on Thursday, May 11 at 8 p.m., don't miss the CPTV premiere of *Building a Great Life*. This documentary, presented in partnership with the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities (CTCDD), explores the notion of closing Connecticut's state institutions for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Is encouraging community living a better option? Learn about the debate surrounding this idea.

Finally, on Thursday, May 18 at 8 p.m., CPTV joins with Blue Cross Blue Shield, Hartford Health-Care Behavioral Health Network, and St. Francis Hospital Medical Center for the *Life Lessons* presentation *Facing Down Opioid Addiction*.

I hope it's obvious we are devoted to delving into stories and subjects that help us all better understand our world, our communities, and ourselves. Partnership Productions like these help us do just that. We thank all of the organizations that have partnered with us and supported these projects. We also thank our members, whose support is also vital in making it all possible!

Jerry Franklin
President and CEO, Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network

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"What's On!"

is published monthly as a supplement in Connecticut Magazine by Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network, 1049 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105. Connecticut Magazine, 100 Gando Drive, New Haven, CT 06513, is published monthly by Digital First Media, Lower Makefield Corporate Center, 790 Township Line Road, 3rd Floor, Yardley, PA 19067. Editorial content for "What's On!", the 16-page program guide devoted to CPTV and WNPR, is determined by Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN), a nonprofit corporation chartered by the state of Connecticut.

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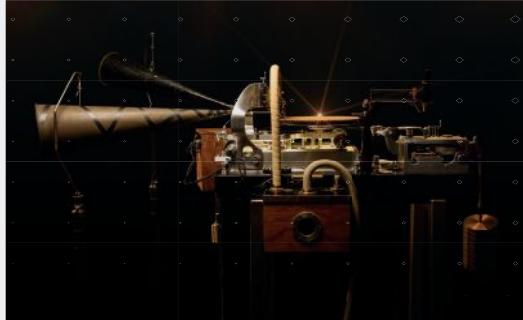
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HIGHLIGHTS



American Epic Tuesdays beginning May 16 at 9 p.m. on CPTV

In the late 1920s, record company scouts toured America with a recording machine for the first time and captured the raw expression of an emerging culture. Follow along as filmmakers use this trail to rediscover the families whose music was recorded – early blues, country, gospel, Hawaiian, Cajun, and folk – without which there would be no rock, pop, R&B, or hip hop.



Nature: Dolphins Spy in the Pod Wednesday, May 3 and 10 at 8 p.m. on CPTV

In this two-part special, the camera eyes of 13 ingenious Spy Creatures, including Spy Dolphin, Spy Nautilus, and Spy Turtle, capture the dolphin's "superpod" behavior never filmed before. Infiltrate the social world of dolphins, from strange gatherings to gang rivalries.

NOVA: Troubled Waters Wednesday, May 31 at 9 p.m. on CPTV

In this special report, NOVA investigates the water disaster in Flint and unravels a disturbing truth about the vulnerabilities of water systems across the country. Discover the delicate intricacies of water chemistry, the biology of lead poisoning, and the engineering challenge of replacing this ravaged infrastructure.



National Memorial Day Concert Sunday, May 28 at 8 p.m. on CPTV

The 28th annual broadcast of this night of remembrance honors the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, their families at home, and all those who have given their lives for our country. The concert features acclaimed actors Joe Mantegna and Gary Sinise and an all-star lineup of actors and musicians, along with top pops conductor Jack Everly and the National Symphony Orchestra.



Dark Angel on Masterpiece Sunday, May 21 at 9 p.m. on CPTV

Joanne Froggatt, who stole the hearts of millions of viewers as Anna on *Downton Abbey*, stars in this spine-tingling drama. Dispensing death from the spout of a warm teapot, Froggatt plays the notorious Victorian poisoner Mary Ann Cotton, Britain's first female serial killer.

FLINT WATER PLANT

Carla's Pasta:

An American Success Story



Discover the True Story of One Inspirational Woman This June on CPTV

Next month, CPTV brings the uniquely American success story of Carla's Pasta to audiences across the state. Featuring WNPR's Faith Middleton and founder and president Carla Squatrito, *Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story* premieres Thursday, June 22 at 8:30 p.m. on CPTV.

It began in Torino, Italy. There, a young girl named Carla Merlone fell in love with the art of pasta. She moved to the U.S. in 1968 for love; starting a journey that resulted in her business becoming one of the largest filled pasta companies in the world. Squatrito has built her extraordinary company in Connecticut through hard work, leadership, and an entrepreneurial spirit.

When asked why it was important to share the story of his mother's journey from a young woman in Italy to culinary innovator in America, Sandro Squatrito explained, "What my mother has done in one lifetime is extremely unique in my eyes. When you start with a woman growing up in World War II traveling to a foreign country, knowing no English, and creating a successful business – it's staggering."

Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story uncovers this truly remarkable story, featuring interviews with Carla and those who know and love her most – her family. Because at the heart of her business, one she started in 1978 with the opening of her first store in Manchester, Connecticut, are her loved ones.

"Her example is one that I think many people could use as inspiration," said Squatrito of his mother. "We are overjoyed to share her story and hopefully inspire other young women to pursue their ambitions."

Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story
premieres Thursday, June 22 at 8:30 p.m.
on CPTV.



PLEASE join us

In honor of Carla Squatrito's life and accomplishments, and to share a sneak peek of *Carla's Pasta: An American Success Story*, the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network is proud to present

The First Annual Women's Leadership Celebration and Scholarship Award Presentation

Thursday, June 1 at 6 p.m.
Hartford Marriott Downtown
Cocktail Hour, Dinner, and Scholarship
Award Presentation

For more information and to purchase
tickets, please visit
cpbn.org/carlaspastacelebration.

Prime Time | May 1-6

- CPTV Original, CPTV National Production or Presentation, or CPTV Co-production indicated in **blue font**.
- Program or episode premiere indicated by a **P**. Live broadcasts indicated by a **L**.
- Asterisk indicates that show begins prior to 8 p.m.; two asterisks indicate that show ends after 12 a.m. Visit CPTV.org/schedule for exact start and end times.
- This schedule is accurate as of press time; visit CPTV.org/schedule for the most up-to-date program schedule.

MON 1	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 2 P Return to the coastal city in this new episode.		Antiques Roadshow - Corpus Christi, Part 1 A Diego Rivera oil painting is appraised.		Gluten Free Explore the facts, myths, mysteries, and potential dangers surrounding gluten.		Independent Lens - National Bird P Whistleblowers try to break the silence around the U.S. drone war.	
CPTV4U	Life on the Reef - Parts 1, 2 & 3 View Australia's Great Barrier Reef, one of the richest and most complex natural ecosystems on Earth, through the eyes of those who live, work, and play there.						Charlie Rose	
TUE 2	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Victorian Slum House - Part 1: 1860s P Participants move into an 1860s tenement.		Ripley - Believe It or Not: American Experience Robert Ripley launched an entertainment empire.		Parents and Teens Behind the Wheel Follow issues families face as teens learn to drive.		Frontline - Second Chance Kids P Explore the fight over the fate of juveniles in prison for murder.	
CPTV4U	Father Brown - The Standing Stones		Downton Abbey, Season 1 on Masterpiece - Part 3 Matthew grows into his role as heir.		Theater Talk		Charlie Rose	
WED 3	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Dolphins: Spy in the Pod, Part 1 P Cameras infiltrate the social world of dolphins.		NOVA - Super Tunnel Engineers and designers build a huge subterranean railway deep under London.		Plants Behaving Badly - Murder and Mayhem P The behavior of carnivorous plants is examined.		Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 2 (See CPTV, May 1 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 2		Antiques Roadshow - Albuquerque, Part 3		Keep 'Em Flying Trace the history of aviation in Connecticut.		Charlie Rose	
THU 4	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Life Lessons - A Vibrant Retirement P A panel of experts discuss the facts about retirement.		When I'm 65 P Longstanding myths about retirement and living longer are challenged.		The Bletchley Circle - Blood on Their Hands, Part 2 An investigation reveals a military cover-up.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV4U	Craft in America - Nature P The American landscape is celebrated.		The Hudson River School: Artistic Pioneers P		The Royal Paintbox See a treasure trove of royal artistic works.		Charlie Rose	
FRI 5	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Dead Letters, Part 2 P The investigation into a woman's death continues.		Death in Paradise - The Blood-Red Sea P The leader of a marine salvage team is found dead.		The Kate - Mary Lambert The pop star, poet, and writer moves audiences to laughter and tears.		Sing That Thing, Season 3 P	Sun Studio Sessions
CPTV4U	NOVA - Wild Ways Can wildlife corridors help endangered species?		NOVA - Animal Mummies Animal mummies are buried in Egypt.		Egypt's Treasure Guardians Meet people protecting Egypt's heritage.		Charlie Rose	
SAT 6	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Viewers' Favorites* (Start: 7:30 p.m.) From toe-tapping music to educational how-to's, CPTV presents some of its most popular specials.				Movie Classics Collection - The Band Wagon P Two playwrights bring a movie dancer (Fred Astaire) to New York for a Broadway show with a ballerina (Cyd Charisse).		Science Goes to the Movies	
CPTV4U	Masterpiece Mystery! - Foyle's War, Season 7: The Cage Foyle finds a mysterious military facility.		Vera, Season 4 - Protected Vera investigates when a man is found dead on a beach.				Wolf Hall on Masterpiece - Part 4 Anne gives birth to a girl.	



Victorian Slum House

Tuesdays beginning May 2 at 8 p.m. on CPTV

Travel back in time to the British slums of the 1800s, where a group of modern day families, couples, and individuals recreate life in London's East End as their forbearers once lived between 1860-1900. It's an eye-opening experience for the participants as they each confront the harsh realities of the past and together lay the groundwork for welfare reform in the 20th Century.

Prime Time | May 7-12

SUN 7	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Call the Midwife, Season 6 - Part 6 P Valerie oversees the care of an expectant Somali woman.		Home Fires on Masterpiece, Season 2 - Part 6 P Everyone prepares for a wedding.		Grantchester, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 5 Are the duo's crime-fighting days over?		Grantchester, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 6 A dead girl's parents seek revenge.	
CPTV4U	Woodsongs - The O'Connor Band with Mark O'Connor P		Austin City Limits - Robert Plant & the Sensational Space Shifters		Latin Music USA - The Chicano Wave/Divas and Superstars Mexican-Americans in the Southwest shape their own distinct music.			
MON 8	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 3 P The team concludes their visit with great finds.		Antiques Roadshow - Corpus Christi, Part 2 Hear great stories about a John Lennon signature.		Independent Lens - The Last Laugh P Mel Brooks and other Jewish comics and thinkers discuss what should be off-limits in comedy.		Independent Lens - The Prison in...** P	
CPTV4U	Animal R&R - Part 1 P A possum with a sneezing problem is featured.		Animal R&R - Part 2 P A peregrine falcon is rescued.		Nature - Parrot Confidential Meet parrots in need of rescue.		Charlie Rose	
TUE 9	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Victorian Slum House - Part 2: 1870s P The slum dwellers toil to fulfil clothing orders.		Bonnie and Clyde: American Experience The story of the famous outlaw couple is told.		Frontline - Poverty, Politics, and Profit P America's affordable housing crisis is investigated.		Life Lessons - A Vibrant Retirement (See CPTV, May 4 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Father Brown - The Paradise of... (See CPTV, May 11 at 9 p.m.)		Downton Abbey, Season 1 on Masterpiece - Part 4 The heir crisis at Downton takes an unexpected turn.		Theater Talk		Charlie Rose	
WED 10	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Dolphins: Spy in the Pod, Part 2 P Explore dolphin communication and strategies.		NOVA - Arctic Ghost Ship The Franklin Expedition is explored 160 years after vanishing.		Plants Behaving Badly - Sex & Lies P Revel in the beauty of orchids and examine their flowers.		Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 3 (See CPTV, May 8 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Antiques Roadshow - Virginia Beach, Part 3		Mark Twain's Neighborhood: Nook Farm		The '60s in Connecticut The turbulent decade is discussed.		Charlie Rose	
THU 11	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Building a Great Life P Follow people with intellectual disabilities working to realize their full potential.		Father Brown - The Paradise of Thieves A dead man is found inside a locked bank vault.		The Bletchley Circle - Uncustomed Goods, Part 1 Millie strives to combat human trafficking.		Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV4U	POV - Iris Style maven Iris Apfel has had an outsized presence on the New York fashion scene for decades.		POV - Koch New York City Mayor Ed Koch brought bravado and egocentricity to the office.				Charlie Rose	
FRI 12	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Vixen's Run, Part 1 P An aristocrat dies after gathering his three wives at his hall.		Death in Paradise - Flames of Love P Sian Evans is found shot in a hostel shower.		The Kate - Maurice Hines The tap dancer and performer sings classic songs and tells heartfelt stories.		Sing That Thing, Season 3 P	Sun Studio Sessions
CPTV4U	NOVA - Arctic Ghost Ship (See CPTV, May 10 at 9 p.m.)		Great Polar Bear Feast Polar bears gather for an epic feast.		Operation Maneater - Polar Bear Polar bears cause havoc in Canada.		Charlie Rose	



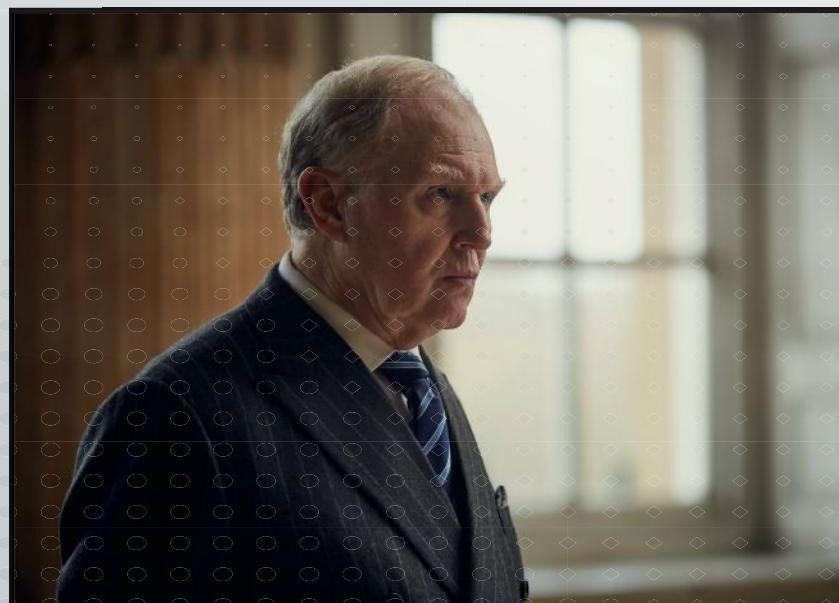
Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood: Tiger Family Trip Monday, May 8 on CPTV Kids

In an all-new one-hour special, the Tiger family heads out on a road trip to Grandpere's! At first, Daniel doesn't know what to expect on the ride, but with a helpful map from Mom Tiger, Daniel learns that there are so many exciting things to do and see when you're on a trip with your family.



Prime Time | May 13-18

SAT 13	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Movie Classics Collection - Carousel* 	(Start: 7:30 p.m.) A carnival barker who dies in a robbery gets to return to Earth for one day to guide his daughter.	Carol Burnett: The Mark Twain Prize Julie Andrews, Tony Bennett, Tim Conway, Tina Fey, and others celebrate comedic icon Carol Burnett.	Father Brown - The Deadly Seal**				
CPTV4U	Masterpiece Mystery! - Foyle's War, Season 7: Sunflower	Foyle must protect a Nazi-turned-informant.	Vera, Season 4 - The Deer Hunters	When a suspected poacher is found dead, Vera digs into his tragic life.	Wolf Hall on Masterpiece - Part 5	Henry starts to notice Jane Seymour.		
SUN 14	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Call the Midwife, Season 6 - Part 7	 Dr. Turner helps a couple caring for a disabled child.	King Charles III on Masterpiece 	The hit Broadway show is adapted for television. A 2016 Tony nominee for Best Play, the drama imagines Prince Charles' ascension to the throne following Queen Elizabeth's death.	Midsomer Murders - Vixen's Run, Part 1	(See CPTV, May 12 at 8 p.m.)		
CPTV4U	Woodsongs - Celebration of Merle Travis with Thom Bresh...		Austin City Limits - Gary Clark Jr./Courtney Barnett	The Kate - Jane Lynch	Lynch performs her comedy cabaret.	The Kate - Kiefer Sutherland	The actor and musician performs.	
MON 15	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 1	 Roadshow returns to Orlando for the first time since 2007.	Antiques Roadshow - Corpus Christi, Part 3	A Charles Courtney Curran portrait is appraised.	NOVA - Holocaust Escape Tunnel	Archaeologists probe the ruins of a Nazi execution site.	Independent Lens - Forever Pure** 	A famed Israeli soccer club acquires two Muslim players.
CPTV4U	Nature - Giraffes: Africa's Gentle Giants		Journeys in Africa - Mini-Marathon	See four episodes of this innovative travel series that focuses on the African continent.	Charlie Rose			
TUE 16	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Victorian Slum House - Part 3: 1880s	 Upper-class visitors come to the slum.	American Epic - The Big Bang 	The Carter family and others record music in the 1920s.	It's "Just" Anxiety 	Several individuals suffering from a variety of anxiety symptoms are profiled.	Frontline - American Patriot 	The Bundy family's fight against the government invigorated militias.
CPTV4U	Father Brown - The Deadly Seal	(See CPTV, May 18 at 9 p.m.)	Downton Abbey, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 1	Two years into WWI, Downton is in turmoil as Matthew and other young men go to war.	Charlie Rose			
WED 17	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Animal Misfits	Odd and unlikely creatures that may seem ill-equipped for survival are explored.	NOVA - Chinese Chariot Revealed 	Experts reconstruct China's ancient chariots.	Food: Delicious Science - We Are What We Eat 	Learn how the chemistry of food keeps us healthy.	Gluten Free	(See CPTV, May 1 at 10 p.m.)
CPTV4U	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 1		Homefront: Connecticut During WWII	Explore how Connecticut residents were affected by WWII.	Last Ring Home 	Charlie Rose		
THU 18	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Life Lessons - Facing Down Opioid Addiction 	(See page 75.)	Father Brown - The Deadly Seal	Father Brown is told that Bishop Talbot will be assassinated.	The Bletchley Circle - Uncustomed Goods, Part 2	(See CPTV, May 11 at 10 p.m.)	Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV4U	Refuge: Stories of the Selfhelp Home 		NOVA - Holocaust Escape Tunnel	(See CPTV, May 15 at 10 p.m.)	Enemy of the Reich: The Noor Inayat Khan Story	Charlie Rose		



King Charles III on Masterpiece

Sunday, May 14 at 9 p.m. on CPTV

A 2016 Tony nominee for Best Play, *King Charles III* imagines Prince Charles' ascension to the throne following Queen Elizabeth's death. This adaptation reunites star Tim Pigott-Smith as King Charles III and the creative team of writer Mike Bartlett and director Rupert Goold.

Prime Time | May 19-24

FRI 19	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Vixen's Run, Part 2  (See CPTV, May 12 at 8 p.m.)	Death in Paradise See another mystery set on the beautiful island of Saint Marie.			The Kate - Roseanne Cash The singer-songwriter performs a deeply personal concert.		Sing That Thing, Season 3 	Sun Studio Sessions
CPTV4U	NOVA - Chinese Chariot Revealed (See CPTV, May 17 at 9 p.m.)	NOVA - Vikings Unearthed Dr. Sarah Parcak uncovers new clues about the legendary expeditions and settlements of the Vikings.					Charlie Rose	
SAT 20	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Viewers' Favorites* (Start: 7:30 p.m.) Sit back and relax with Saturday night entertainment courtesy of CPTV!		Movie Classics Collection - Show Boat  A captain's daughter marries a gambler who turns performer on a Mississippi riverboat. Kathryn Grayson, Howard Keel, and Ava Gardner star.				Father Brown** (Start: 11:45 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Vera, Season 4 - Death of a Family Man When a businessman is found dead, Vera uncovers secrets.	Vera, Season 5 - Changing Tides The death of a woman in a suspicious fire is investigated.					Wolf Hall on Masterpiece - Part 6 Henry wants to be rid of Anne.	
SUN 21	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Call the Midwife, Season 6 - Part 8  An unexpected turn of events leads to a hastily arranged wedding.	Dark Angel on Masterpiece  Joanne Froggatt ("Downton Abbey") stars as Victorian poisoner Mary Ann Cotton, Britain's first female serial killer.					Midsomer Murders - Vixen's Run, Part 2 (See CPTV, May 12 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Woodsongs - Michael Martin Murphey & the Kentucky... 	Austin City Limits - Tedeschi Trucks Band	Front and Center - Kaleo 		Front and Center - Dawes 			
MON 22	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 2  The team continues to appraise items in the Florida city.	Antiques Roadshow - Boston, Part 1 Discoveries include a Norman Rockwell collection.	NOVA - Chinese Chariot Revealed (See CPTV, May 17 at 9 p.m.)				Independent Lens - They Call Us Monsters**  "The Compound" is home to violent juvenile offenders.	
CPTV4U	Nature - Dolphins: Spy in the Pod, Part 1	Nature - Dolphins: Spy in the Pod, Part 2	Sex in the Wild - Dolphins Learn about dolphins' mating strategies.				Charlie Rose	
TUE 23	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Victorian Slum House - Part 4: 1890s  Some residents are plagued by a water shortage.	American Epic - Blood & Soil  Delta blues, gospel, and protest songs are recorded in the South.	Life Lessons - Facing Down Opioid Addiction (See page 75.)				Frontline - Inside Trump's White House  The power struggles in the inner circle are highlighted.	
CPTV4U	Father Brown - The Owl of... (See CPTV, May 25 at 9:30 p.m.)	Downton Abbey, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 2	Downton Abbey, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 3				Charlie Rose	
WED 24	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - The Gathering Swarms Meet locusts, cicadas, and other extraordinary swarming creatures.	NOVA - Meteor Strike Scientists hunt for clues to the origin and makeup of a meteor.	Food: Delicious Science - A Matter of Taste  Learn about the science that makes food taste good.				Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 2 (See CPTV, May 22 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 2	Battlefront: Connecticut During WWII	Enola Gay's Navigator: Theodore "Dutch" Van Kirk				Charlie Rose	



Food – Delicious Science Wednesdays beginning May 17 at 10 p.m. on CPTV

Discover the thrilling science behind the food on your plate and the physics, chemistry, and biology that lies hidden inside every bite. The latest imaging techniques reveal the inner world of food and why a variety of edible ingredients have ended up in our diet.

Prime Time | May 25-31

THU 25	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Harvesting Stones  This historical documentary shares the stories of the Jewish farmers of Eastern Connecticut.			Father Brown - The Owl of Minerva & The Mask of the Demon In back-to-back episodes, Inspector Sullivan becomes a fugitive; then, a film director is killed.			Ask This Old House	This Old House
CPTV4U	Frontline - Inside Trump's White... (See CPTV, May 23 at 11 p.m.)			The Great War: American Experience - Part 1 America's tortured, nearly three-year journey to entering WWI is explored.			Charlie Rose	
FRI 26	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Midsomer Murders - Down Among the Dead Men, Part 1  Black-mail, revenge, and murder strike.		Jacques Pepin: American Masters  See how Jacques Pepin became a beloved food icon.	Julia Child: American Masters The chef's life is celebrated through never-before-seen photos.			Bluegrass Underground	Sun Studio Sessions
CPTV4U	NOVA - Meteor Strike (See CPTV, May 24 at 9 p.m.)		NOVA - Asteroid: Doomsday or Payday?	Space Men: American Experience			Charlie Rose	
SAT 27	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Kate - Roseanne Cash (See CPTV, May 19 at 10 p.m.)		Movie Classics Collection - Walk the Line  Johnny Cash falls for June Carter and struggles with drug addiction on the way to music stardom. Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon star.				Father Brown - The Mask of the Demon (Start: 11:15 p.m.; See CPTV, May 25 at 9:30 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Vera, Season 5 - Old Wounds The remains of a teenage girl are found half-buried in a wood.		Vera, Season 5 - Muddy Waters The death of a John Doe found in a slurry pit is investigated.				Vera, Season 5 - Shadows in the Sky** A man falls from a car park.	
SUN 28	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	2017 National Memorial Day Concert  The 28th annual broadcast of this night of remembrance honors U.S. men and women in uniform and their families.		PBS Previews: The Vietnam War 	2017 National Memorial Day Concert (See CPTV, May 28 at 8 p.m.)			America's Veterans: A Musical...**	
CPTV4U	Loretta Lynn: American Masters Country music legend Loretta Lynn's hard-fought road to stardom is explored.			The Kate - Roseanne Cash (See CPTV, May 19 at 10 p.m.)			Front and Center - CMA Songwriter Series w. Jennifer Nettles 	
MON 29	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 3  The team concludes their trip to Florida with great finds.		Antiques Roadshow - Boston, Part 2 Guests bring in 1970s Beatles memorabilia and more.				Harvesting Stones (See CPTV, May 25 at 8 p.m.)	Independent Lens - Farmer/Veteran** 
CPTV4U	The Queen's Garden Go inside the Buckingham Palace Gardens.		Plants Behaving Badly - Murder... (See CPTV, May 3 at 10 p.m.)	Plants Behaving Badly - Sex... (See CPTV, May 10 at 10 p.m.)			Charlie Rose	
TUE 30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	The Victorian Slum House - Part 5: 1900s  The slum dwellers face a "new century."		American Epic - Out of the Many, the One  Discover how America's diverse cultures contribute to the country's many different musical styles.				Frontline - Being Mortal  How do doctors care for terminally ill patients?	POV - Seven Songs for a Long Life**
CPTV4U	Father Brown - The Mask of the... (See CPTV, May 25 at 9:30 p.m.)		Downton Abbey, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 4	Downton Abbey, Season 2 on Masterpiece - Part 5			Charlie Rose	
WED 31	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
CPTV	Nature - Touching the Wild A researcher spends seven years among a herd of wild mule deer.		NOVA - Troubled Waters  The factors that led to the water crisis in Flint, Michigan are examined.	Food: Delicious Science - Food on the Brain  Learn how the chemistry in food creates cravings.			Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 3 (See CPTV, May 29 at 8 p.m.)	
CPTV4U	Antiques Roadshow - Orlando, Part 3		Heroes: Connecticut During WWII	D-Day: Over Normandy  See aerial footage of Allied objectives.			Charlie Rose	

Jacques Pépin: American Masters

Friday, May 26 at 9 p.m. on CPTV

Explore the story of chef Jacques Pépin, a young immigrant with a charming French accent and a mastery of cooking and teaching so breathtaking he became an early food icon — joining James Beard and Julia Child among the handful of people who transformed the way the country views the world of chefs, restaurants, and food. At 80 years old, Pépin has traveled the world, generated 13 successful television cooking series, and written nearly 30 cookbooks.

Life LESSONS

Life Lessons is a series of **live** television events in which local experts help us find smart ways to make decisions, solve problems, and ace the biggest test of all — life!

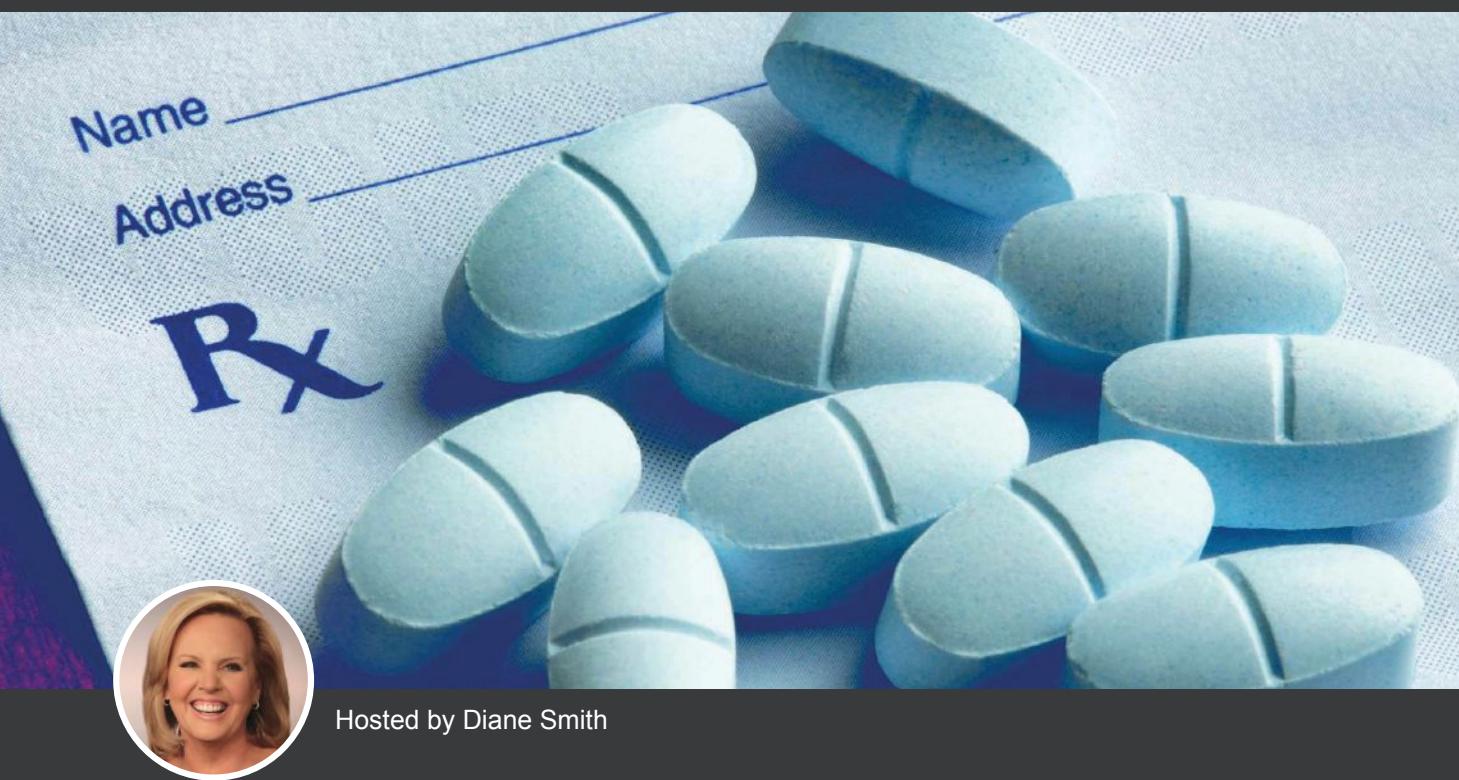
Join our Studio Audience!

For this **LIVE** television event

Facing Down Opioid Addiction

Thursday, May 18 at 8 p.m.

Repeats **Tuesday, May 23 at 10 p.m. and Sunday, June 18 at 6 p.m.** or tune in to **CPTV or CPTV.org/lifelessons**



Hosted by Diane Smith

With more than 900 overdose deaths in 2016, Connecticut's opioid epidemic remains a critical problem affecting individuals and families from all corners of the state.

During this live TV event, our expert panel will dispel the myths and confusion around treatments and programs for opioid addiction, explore effective medical options and services, and highlight the support systems available to loved ones.

Register to join our live studio audience or find out more at cptv.org/lifelessons
Registration is required and space is limited.

Presenting Sponsor:



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| dining guide | hartford county

Restaurant Bricco • Italian Every dish is crafted from scratch, holding true to the essentials of Sunday dinner. • 78 Lasalle Road, West Hartford, 860-233-0220 billygrant.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Rizzuto's • Italian A warm urban environment with a rustic Italian menu. Offerings include an extensive antipasti selection, creative small plates, house-made pasta and wood-fired Neapolitan pizza. • 111 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-232-5000 rizzutos.com. Open daily. L, D, SB, \$\$\$

Rooster Co. • American • EP Rotisserie chickens made to perfection are the heart and soul of menu here. • 1076 Main St., Newington, 860-757-3969 roostercompany.net. Open daily L D, \$\$, WA

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse • Steak Billed as "the steak that speaks for itself" the steaks served here are USDA Prime. In addition, the restaurant utilizes locally sourced produce in its recipes. • 2513 Berlin Tpke., Newington, 860-666-2202 ruthschris.com. Open daily. L (Sun.) D, \$\$\$, WA

Sayulita • Mexican • EP Named for a Mexican fishing village, this restaurant has a party vibe and uses top-of-the-line ingredients. Specialties include a variety of tacos and Ceviche de Playa. • 865 Main St., Glastonbury, 860-430-9941 cantinasayulita.com. Open daily. D, L (Sat.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

Shady Glen • American A dairy bar/restaurant known for cheeseburgers and ice cream. • 840 Middle Tpke. E, Manchester, 860-649-4245; 360 Middle Tpke. W, Manchester, 860-643-0511. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Smokin' with Chris • Barbecue • EP Specializes in barbecue and other smoked meats, but also offers specialty salads, seafood and vegetarian dishes. • Southington, 860-620-9133 smokinwithchris.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Sorella • Italian A new kid on the block from restaurant pros Billy Carbone and Dan Keller, who own Dish across the street. • 901 Main St., Hartford, 860-244-9084 sorellahartford.com. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

Staropolska • Polish • EP Authentic homemade Polish cuisine prepared fresh daily and in an in-house bar. • 252 Broad St., New Britain, 860-612-1711 staropolska.net. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

Sushi Red • Sushi • EP Offers up delicious, fresh, hand-crafted sushi in a quiet, intimate setting. • 450 East St., Plainville, 860-410-1829. Closed Sun. L D, \$

Tisane Euro-Asian Café • Asian Fusion The diverse menu is complemented by more than 40 specialty martinis and other specialty drinks. Try the Far East nachos, wings trio, Tisane Cobb salad, noodle bowls and espresso steak. • 537 Farmington Ave., Hartford, 860-523-5417 mytisane.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$, E, WA

Trevi • Italian • EP Cuisine is inspired from central and upper Italy, with seasonal varieties and unique nightly specials. • 980 Farmington Ave., West Hartford, 860-232-0407 trevact.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

Trumbull Kitchen • American "Global comfort food" is served at communal tables at this sophisticated city brasserie. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 150 Trumbull St., Hartford, 860-493-7417 maxrestaurantgroup.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D LS, \$\$, E

Vinted Wine Bar & Kitchen • Tapas This exciting restaurant in Blue Back Square serves 68 wines by the glass along with an ambitious small-plates menu. • 63 Memorial Road, West Hartford, 860-206-4648 vintedwinebar.com. Open daily. D, \$\$, WA

| Litchfield County |

Arethusa al Tavolo • New American • EP RC This high-flying, country restaurant serves sparkling dishes like butter-poached halibut with crab paella, rack of lamb and a glorious reinvention of Peking duck. • 828 Bantam Road, Bantam, 860-567-0043 arethusaal tavolo.com. Open Thurs.-Sun. D, \$\$\$, WA

Carole Peck's Good News Cafe • New American • EP Chef Carole Peck offers original dishes like warm crab taco and chicken tagine. • 694 Main St. S., Woodbury, 203-266-GOOD good-news-cafe.com. Closed Tues. L D, \$\$

Community Table • American • EP Chef Joel Viehland offers a seasonal menu using only ingredients grown, raised or foraged within a 200-mile radius. • 223 Litchfield Tpke., Washington, 860-868-9354 communitytablect.com. Closed Tues.-Wed. D SB, \$\$, WA

The Cookhouse • Barbecue • EP "Slo-smoked" baby-back ribs and pulled pork are the name of the game here. • 31 Danbury Road (Route 7), New Milford, 860-355-4111 thecookhouse.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Falls Village Inn • American Enjoy a menu that acknowledges a desire for Classic American comfort fare — think fresh-caught seafood and locally grown produce — that changes seasonally. • 33 Railroad St., Falls Village, 860-824-0033 thefallsvillageinn.com. Open daily (Closed Mon.-Tues. during winter). L (Sat.), D, SB, \$\$

Hidden Valley Eatery • American • EP Locally sourced comfort food with a number of vegetarian options. Seasonal dinner menu changes nightly. • 88 Bee Brook Road, Washington Depot, 860-619-0660 hiddenvalleyeatery.com. Closed Tues. B, L, D (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$

The Hopkins Inn • Austrian/American A country inn with an Old World atmosphere known for wiener schnitzel, backhendl and fresh-caught trout. • 22 Hopkins Road, Warren, 860-868-7295. Closed Mon. B L (Tues.-Sat.) D, \$\$\$

Litchfield Saltwater Grille • Seafood Casual and fine dining with seafood, raw bar, meat, vegetarian and kids menu options. Happy hour is Mon.-Fri 4-6 p.m., and the lounge is open late Fri. & Sat. Outdoor patio and private dining available. • 26 Commons Drive, Route 202, Litchfield, 860-567-4900 litchfieldsaltwatergrille.org. Open daily. \$\$, E, WA

Mountainside Café • Farm to Table Modern rustic cafe offers up a fresh approach to American classics, such as the Country Burger and the Johnny Cash Skillet, in a warm and casual atmosphere. • 251 Route 7 South, Fall Village, 860-824-7876 mountainside.com/cafe. Open daily. B L D SB, \$, WA

Patty's Restaurant • American A delightful breakfast experience with generous portions — the menu is influenced by season and might include treats such as raisin French toast or apple, walnut and cranberry pancakes. • 499 Bantam Road, Litchfield, 860-567-3335. Open daily. B L, \$

The Restaurant at Winvian Farm • French • EP Chef Chris Eddy constantly changes the menu, using simple and seasonal ingredients accented with unusual and fresh findings. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 winvian.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. L D, \$\$\$, WA

RSVP • French • EP A "special concept" French restaurant, RSVP offers carefully selected five-course prix fixe meal. Alcohol is BYOB only, and dinner is by reservation only. • 7 Railroad St., West Cornwall, 860-672-7787 rsvp-restaurant.com. Open Fri-Sun. D, \$\$\$

Scarpelli's • American Since 1936, Scarpelli's has been offering classic comfort foods like chicken parmigiana, meat loaf, fried chicken and fish-and-chips. • 865 Migeon Ave., Torrington, 860-482-7977 scarpellisclassiccatering.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$, WA

Upper Crust Trattoria • Italian Northern Italian cuisine in the warm atmosphere of a Tuscan-style farm house. • 373 Litchfield Road, New Milford, 860-350-0006 theuppercrustcucina.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

The Venetian Restaurant • Classic Italian Enjoy seasonal specials and traditional fare like house-made pasta. • 52 East Main St., Torrington, 860-489-8592 thevenetianrestaurant.com. Closed Tues. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$, WA

West Street Grill • New American • EP An innovative restaurant with a star-studded clientele and menu to match. Serves wild fish, handmade pasta and organic salads. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 43 West St., Litchfield, 860-567-3885 weststreetgrill.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$\$, E (on weekends), WA

The White Hart • Farm to Table • EP High-quality cuisine made from an A-list of farm sources served in a rustic, recently remodeled historic country inn dating to 1805. • 15 Under Mountain Road, Salisbury, 860-435-0030 whitehartinn.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

The White Horse Country Pub • American • EP RC Serves American pub favorites like burgers, ribs and seafood bake, along with some English ones — shepherd's pie, fish-and-chips and bangers and mash. Outdoor dining in warmer months provides a delightful experience. • 258 New Milford Tpke., Washington, 860-868-1496 whitehorse-countypub.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Winvian • American • EP Simplicity and indulgence converge with fresh and spontaneous farm-to-table menus and an eclectic wine selection. Reservations are required. • 155 Alain White Road, Morris, 860-567-9600 winvian.com. Closed Tues. L (Sat.-Sun.), D (Wed.-Mon.), \$\$\$

Yokohama • Japanese • EP Delicious tempura and teriyaki dishes, plus sushi and sashimi is served at this beloved New Milford restaurant. • 131 Danbury Road, New Milford, 860-355-0556 yokohama-sushi.net. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

| Middlesex County |

Alforno • Northern Italian Known for a great selection of house-made ravioli, including veal osso buco with fresh ricotta ravioli, butternut squash ravioli and wild boar ravioli, as well as tagliatelle Bolognese and arugula chicken. • 1654 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-4166 alforno.net. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Angelico's Lake House • American Overlooking Lake Pocotopaug, Angelico's features great outside dining and a tiki hut. Try the spinach risotto, roast prime rib, stuffed salmon or lobster ravioli with sautéed shrimp. • 81 North Main St., East Hampton, 860-267-1276 angelicoslakehouse.com. Open daily. L D LS SB, \$\$, E, WA

Baci Grill • Modern Italian Try house specialties like grilled mango-and-chipotle pork loin, chicken sausage and broccoli rabe pasta, Guinness skirt steak and scallop risotto at this casual, trendy restaurant. • 134 Berlin Road, Cromwell, 860-613-2224 bacigrill.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

The Blue Oar • Seafood • EP Open seasonally, with open-air dining and fresh-catch entrees. BYOB; cash only. • 16 Snyder Road, Haddam, 860-345-2994 blueoarct.wix.com. Open daily, Mother's Day weekend-Labor Day; Thurs.-Sun., Labor Day-end of Sept. L D, \$\$

Boom • American Dine on the outdoor deck overlooking a sea of yachts. Favorites include fried oysters, filet mignon Oscar with crabmeat-sherry cream and BBQ duck quesadillas. • Brewer's Pilots Point Marina, 63 Pilots Point Drive, Westbrook, 860-399-2322 boomrestaurant.net. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Chester's Barbecue • Barbecue Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 10 West Main St., Clinton, 860-669-6868 chestersbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Chip's Pub • Pub Grub This sports bar with a separate family-friendly dining area offers up 10-oz. burgers, as well as seafood and south-of-the-border fare. • 24 W. Main St., Clinton, 860-669-3463 chipspub3.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Cuckoo's Nest • Mexican • RC Housed in a 200-year-old barn, Cuckoo's Nest has been serving nachos, fajitas, Cajun shrimp and scallops for more than 35 years. • 1712 Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-399-9060 cuckoosnest.biz. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Dattilo Fine Italian at Water's Edge Resort and Spa • Italian Enjoy spectacular ocean views and Italian specialties like Veal Romano, Wild Mushroom Arancini and Lobster Ravioli. And join us for our award-winning Sunday Brunch! • 1525 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-399-5901 watersedgeresortandspa.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$\$, E

El Pulpo Restaurant & Tapas Bar • Mediterranean Paella de mariscos and Vieiras a la Plancha (grilled diver sea scallops and lobster over frayed fontina cheese risotto and champagne sauce) are among the highlights of this romantic restaurant. • 386 Main St., Middletown, 860-788-7525. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Eli Cannon's Tap Room • Beer Bar • EP The Connecticut innovator of the modern beer bar, Eli Cannon's has been pouring sought-after brews since long before it was a trendy business model. Food favorites here include the famous nachos, chicken wings (there's 20 custom sauces), the classic cannon burger and the blackened chicken wrap. • 695 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-3547 elicannons.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri.-Sun.) D LS, \$\$, WA

Fresh Salt at Saybrook Point Inn • American • EP Drink in the glorious water view while savoring cioppino, merlot-braised short ribs, osso buco and Block Island swordfish. • 2 Bridge St., Old Saybrook, 860-395-2000 saybrook.com. Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, E, WA

The Good Elephant Bistro • Vietnamese • EP The elephant in this room is flavor—and lots of it. From five-spice duck to sushi-grade tuna, this restaurant serves the salty, sour, bitter and sweet flavors of Vietnamese cuisine. • 59 Main St., Chester, 860-526-5301 goodelephantcafe.com. Open Wed.-Sat. D, \$\$

The Griswold Inn • American The beloved 1776 "Gris" features classic New England cuisine in the dining room, small plates and 50 wines by the glass in the wine bar, and a lively taproom. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 36 Main St., Essex, 860-767-1776 griswoldinn.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Iguanas Ranas Taqueria • Mexican • EP Affordable, fresh and authentic Mexican food served fresh and with home-style taste. • 484 Main St., Middletown, 860-346-8630 iguanasranastaqueria.com. Closed Sun. L D, \$

It's Only Natural (ION) Restaurant • Vegetarian • EP Vegan/vegetarian offerings with a Southwestern bent, plus a full organic bar. • 606 Main St., Middletown, 860-346-9210 ionrestaurant.com. Open daily. L, D (Mon.-Sat.), SB, \$\$

La Boca Mexican Restaurant and Cantina • Mexican Sizzling fajitas, carne asada, grilled mahi mahi and the La Boca classic burrito are just some of the Mexican cuisine favorites offered at this fun restaurant with a patio and live music. • 337 Main St., Middletown, 860-347-4777 labocamexican.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

La Foresta • Italian • RC This big and beautiful ristorante serves garden-fresh, ingredient-driven fine Northern Italian cuisine. It also has a VIP wine cellar and one of the state's best wine selections. • 163 Route 81, Killingworth, 860-663-1155 laforestarestaurant.com. Open daily. D, \$\$, WA

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • Seafood • EP This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 86 Boston Post Road, Westbrook, 860-669-0767 lifish tale.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Liv's Oyster Bar • Seafood • EP Liv's is a stylish, small neighborhood restaurant housed in an old movie theater. Stonington sea scallops, wild salmon, organic chicken and heirloom vegetables top the menu. • 166 Main St., Old Saybrook, 860-395-5577 livs oyster bar.com. Closed Tues. D, \$\$, WA

Luce • American Have your aged steaks grilled over wood chips—there are 20 types to choose from. Offers seafood, an extensive wine list and a great bar atmosphere. • 98 Washington St., Middletown, 860-344-0222 luect.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Luigi's • Italian Enjoy classic Italian favorites like seafood cannelloni, chicken leonardo, veal parmigiana, whole clams, prime rib and other dishes. • 1295 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, 860-388-9190 luigis restaurant.com. Closed Mon. (except in July and Aug.). D, \$\$, WA

Mondo • Pizza • EP This casual, family-owned restaurant specializes in brick-oven, New York-style thin crust pizza. There is also a beer and wine bar. • 10 Main St., Middletown, 860-343-3300 mondomiddletown.com. Open daily L D, \$\$, WA

Puerto Vallarta • Mexican Authentic, traditional Mexican cuisine is prepared fresh daily—sometimes even at your table—mixing time-honored recipes with innovative culinary techniques. • 200 Main Metro Square, Middletown, 860-852-0080 puertovallartausa.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

River Tavern • American • EP Farm-to-table pioneer Jonathan Rapp wears top toque at this town fixture. On the menu: made-to-order guacamole, grilled Stonington swordfish, New York strip. • 23 Main St., Chester, 860-526-9417 rivertavernrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Rustica • Italian • EP The food is made fresh daily, from the pasta to the salads to the homemade desserts. Also offering a varied wine collection. • 189 Middlesex Turnpike, Chester, 860-526-9021 rusticact.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$

Taste of China • Chinese • RC Authentic Szechuan/Chengdu-style food in an elegant yet casual setting, with a full bar and an extensive beer list. • 233 E. Main St., Clinton, 860-664-4454 tasteofchinaclinton.com. Open daily. L D, \$

| New Haven County |

116 Crown • American Tapas / Small Plates • EP Dine on sliders, pizzettes and charcuterie and cheese in a loungelike atmosphere—along with exciting and creative house cocktails. • 116 Crown St., New Haven, 203-777-3116 116crown.com. Closed Mon. D LS, \$\$, E, WA

121 Restaurant @ OXC • American Watch the planes take off and land at 121, located at the Waterbury-Oxford Airport. The menu runs from great pizzas and burgers to an eclectic mix of American favorites. • 7 Juliano Drive, Oxford, 203-262-0121 121restaurantgroup.com/oxc. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E, WA

Adriana's • Italian • EP Old-fashioned Italian fare, served up in generous portions. • 771 Grand Ave., New Haven, 203-865-6474 adrianasnewhaven.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$, WA

Archie Moore's Bar & Restaurant • American • EP

Casual pub-style dining with burgers, nachos and salads. And don't miss the award-winning buffalo chicken wings. • 188½ Willow St., New Haven, 203-773-9870; 39 N. Main St., Wallingford, 203-265-7100; 15 Factory Lane, Milford, 203-876-5088; 17 Elizabeth St., Derby, 203-732-3255 archiemoores.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$

Atelier Florian • Seafood New American fine-dining restaurant with a Belgium flair, featuring a raw bar, fresh seafood and private dining space. • 1166 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-859-5999 atelierflorian.net. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Baja's • Mexican • EP Casual, authentic Mexican food. • 63 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-799-2252. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Bar Bouchee • French • RC Inspired by the neighborhood bistros of Lyon, France—known as bouchons—the menu features authentic French bistro classics as well as innovative cocktails and a carefully selected wine list. • 8 Scotland Ave., Madison, 203-318-8004 barbouchee.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

Barcelona Restaurant & Wine Bar • Spanish Mediterranean • EP

Hip restaurant serving Spanish and Mediterranean cuisine—including tapas, hot and cold. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • 155 Temple St., New Haven, 203-848-3000 barcelonawinebar.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, WA

Bella's Café • American • EP Stylish and cozy cafe serves breakfast and lunch all day during the week, or brunch on weekends. • 896 Whalley Ave., New Haven, 203-387-7107 bellascafe.com. Close Mon. B L SB, \$

Bin 100 • Mediterranean Feast on delicious Mediterranean cuisine elegantly served in a spacious dining room. • 100 Lansdale Ave., Milford, 203-882-1400 bin100restaurant.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Brazi's • Italian Family-friendly restaurant provides a flair for traditional Italian dishes served in a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. • 201 Food Terminal Plaza, New Haven, 203-498-2488 brazis.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Cask Republic • American • EP Serious chef-crafted American fare as well as creative interpretations of globally inspired dishes with an inviting and fun vibe. • 179 Crown St., New Haven, 475-238-8335 caskrepublic.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Ceviche • Latin Fusion • EP Several styles of ceviche are offered here. In addition, the place features a variety of sizzling Latin dishes, cocktails and 30 types of tapas. Try the Granada Mojito, which features pomegranate flavors. • 530 Middlebury Road, Middlebury, 203-527-7634 cevichelatin kitchen.com. Closed Mon. L (Wed.-Thurs.) D LS, \$\$, WA

Chaat House • Indian • EP The inspired, creative and scrumptious menu is full of healthy, delicious, all-vegetarian dishes. • 315 York St., West Haven, 203-934-9676 indianasiangoceries.org. Closed Mon. L D, \$

Chip's Family Restaurant • American • EP Famous for its perfect pancakes, Chip's also has a creative lunch and dinner menu, and guests are welcome to BYOB. • 321 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-795-5065 chip srestaurants.com. Open daily. B L D, \$

Claire's Corner Copia • Vegetarian • EP Café-style spot offering globe-trotting dishes like organic-mushroom crêpes, Bengal curry, Irish breakfast and Lithuanian coffee cake. • 1000 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-562-3888 clairescornercopia.com. Open daily. B L D SB, \$, WA

Consiglio's Restaurant • Classic Italian Family-owned and -run for more than 70 years, Consiglio's is known for classic home-style favorites like homemade cavatelli and braciole, eggplant rollatini and lasagna. • 165 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-4489 consiglios.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Fri., Sun.) D, \$\$

Coromandel Cuisine of India • Indian • EP Wide range of tasty Indian fare is served in a small, tastefully done space. • 185 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-795-9055 coromandelcuisine.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Cristy's Madison • American This restaurant and bar offers breakfast and dinner, as well as a complete burger menu. • 73 W. Wharf Road, Madison, 203-245-7377 cristysmadison.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Dino's Seafood • Seafood This family-run favorite of local North Haven diners for more than four decades prides itself on serving high-quality seafood with the taste of love and joy in every order. Customer favorites include strip clams, fritters, lobster rolls, and top-split hot dogs accompanied with a local craft beer. • 540 Washington Ave., North Haven, 203-239-5548 dinosseafood.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$, WA

Donahue's Madison Beach Grille • Irish Pub • EP

Casual shoreline dining serving up fresh seafood, homemade clam chowder and lobster bisque soups, premier salads and daily specials. Live music on the weekends.

• 1320 Boston Post Road, Madison, 203-318-8362 donahuesmadisonbeachgrille.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Elm City Social • American • EP Features creative and upscale pub-friendly fare in a visually impressive setting. There is also an assortment of excellent cocktails offered. • 286 College St., New Haven, 475-441-7436 elmcitysocial.com. Open daily. L D, LS, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza While world-famous white clam pizza is the standout, just about any pie here is worth the wait. • 157 Wooster St., New Haven, 203-865-5762 pepesizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, WA

G-Zen • Vegetarian • EP Focused on green business ethics, G-Zen offers up locally sourced vegetarian, vegan, organic and sustainable cuisine. • 2 E. Main St., Branford, 203-208-0443 g-z en.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L (Sat.), D, \$\$, E

Geronomo Tequila Bar & Southwest Grill • Southwestern Fusion • EP Mix of traditional Native American, Mexican, Spanish and Anglo-American fare, with bold flavors and authentic ingredients. • 271 Crown St., New Haven, 203-777-7700 geronomobaran grill.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Sat.) D, \$\$

Goodfellas Restaurant • Italian • EP RC The extensive menu is a veritable Best Hits of Italy, featuring pastas and gnocchi, pork chop Milanese, steak pizzaiola, veal saltimbocca and the chef's signature filet cognac. • 702 State St., New Haven, 203-785-8722 goodfellasrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Heirloom • Modern Continental • EP Seasonal Farm & Coastal menu draws its inspiration from the New England pantry with fresh ingredients sourced from regional heritage growers and artisan suppliers. Expansive international wine collection. • The Study at Yale, 1157 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-503-3919 heirloomnewhaven.com. Open daily. B L (Mon.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

Home • American Whether in the main "dining room" or the "living room" lounge, Home offers up locally sourced food and a wide selection of regional craft brews to make its guests feel comfortable and comforted. • 1114 Main St., Branford, 203-483-5896 homerestaurantct.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, E

Ibiza Tapas • Tapas • EP Enjoy a taste of Spain with a wide variety of either hot or cold tapas and an extensive wine bar, in either the vibrantly colored dining area or outdoor patio. • 1832 Dixwell Ave., Hamden, 203-909-6512 ibizatapaswinebar.com. Closed Mon. D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), D, WA

L'Orcio • Contemporary Italian • EP This upscale contemporary restaurant features an outdoor patio and a menu of house-made pastas, grilled whole fish and steaks with seasonal cuisine. • 806 State St., New Haven, 203-777-6670 lorcio.com. Closed Mon. L (Fri.) D, \$\$

La Tavola Ristorante • Classic Italian Enjoy a twist on classic Italian cuisine with prosciutto-wrapped figs, pumpkin ravioli and pepper-encrusted Ahi tuna. • 702 Highland Ave., Waterbury, 203-755-2211 latavolaristorante.com. L D, \$\$, WA

Lao Sze Chuan • Asian In Chinese, Lao means "old, authentic, traditional," and that's the restaurant's goal: to provide authentic Chinese cuisine at a reasonable price. • 1585 Boston Post Road, Milford, 203-783-0558 tonygourmetgroup.com. Open daily. L D, \$

Le Petit Café • French • EP Simple, fresh and elegant dining with the menu du jour in a cozy, unpretentious atmosphere. • 225 Montowese St., Branford, 203-483-9791 lepetitcafe.net. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$

Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale • Seafood • EP This Connecticut institution serves all manner of fresh seafood, from hot lobster rolls to baked stuffed shrimp to fried whole-belly clams. • 501 Long Wharf Drive, New Haven, 203-691-6619; 1301 Boston Post Road, Madison, 203-245-7289 lifish tale.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Mamoun's • Middle Eastern • EP Authentic Middle Eastern cuisine, made from scratch using fresh, natural ingredients, fine imported spices and signature recipes, served in a traditional environment. • 85 Howe St., New Haven, 203-562-8444 mamouns.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$, WA

Mikro Beer Bar • Gastropub • EP The unique menu includes the "French Revolution" flatbread, steamed mussels & frites, and shrimp & grits. The name (pronounced "micro") refers to the bar's intimate space and to the lineup of microbrews. • 3000 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-553-7676 mikrobeerbar.com. Open daily. D SB, \$\$, WA

| dining guide | new haven county

Miya's • Sushi • EP Sushi restaurant like no other, thanks to chef Bun Lai's unique creations. • 68 Howe St., New Haven, 203-777-9760 miyassushi.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L D, \$\$, WA

Moxie • American • EP High-end American cuisine is the star here. Try the perfectly cooked burger that comes with awesome fries doused in kosher salt and malt vinegar powder. • 52 Wall St., Madison, 203-421-6963 moxie-bar.com. Closed Mon. D (Tues.-Sun.) L (Fri.-Sun.), \$\$, WA

olea • Spanish • EP World-class, full-service Spanish restaurant, with a fun tapas bar. • 39 High St., New Haven, 203-780-8925 oleanewhaven.com. Closed Sun. D, \$\$, WA

Park Central Tavern • American The dynamic weekly menu showcases signature entrées and classic favorites made with fresh New England ingredients. • 1640 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-287-8887 parkcentraltavern.com. Open daily. L D, \$, WA

Prime 16 • Burgers • EP Select from a list of gourmet burgers or build your own, plus a variety of sandwiches, salads and small plates. • 172 Temple St., New Haven, 203-782-1616; 464 Boston Post Road, Orange, 203-553-9616 prime16.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Orange), \$

Ristorante Luce • Classic Italian Enjoy the double-cut veal chops, pane cotto, risotto pescatore and daily fish specials. Extensive wine list. • 2987 Whitney Ave., Hamden, 203-407-8000 ristoranteluce.net. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$

Roia • French/Italian This new spot in the Taft Hotel building evokes a golden era when romance reigned. On the menu: artichoke soup, chicken al mattone and panna cotta. • 261 College St., New Haven, 203-200-7045 roiarestaurant.com. Open Wed-Sun. D, \$\$, WA

Sans Souci • American A casual mainstay in the area that prides itself on offering fresh pasta, steak, chicken, veal, seafood and other crowd pleasers. • 2003 N. Broad St., Meriden, 203-639-1777 sansomciarestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L (Tues.-Fri.), D, \$\$

Señor Pancho's • Mexican Festive spot serving up terrific fresh salsa and margaritas to go with mole poblano, steak ranchero and fajitas. • 280 Cheshire Road, Prospect, 203-758-7788; 385 Main St. S., Southbury, 203-262-6984 senorpanchos.com. Open daily. L D, \$, E, WA

Shell & Bones Oyster Bar & Grill • Seafood • EP This waterside restaurant features the celebrated creations of executive chef Arturo Franco-Camacho whose specialties include steak and seafood. • 100 South Water St., New Haven, 203-787-3466 shellandbones.com. Open daily. D L (Sat.-Sun.), \$\$

Shoreline Diner, Guilford • American • EP The seasonal menu focuses on fresh, natural ingredients, with lots of vegetarian and vegan options. • 345 Boston Post Road, Guilford, 203-458-7380 shorelinediner.com. Open daily. BLD, \$, WA

Soul de Cuba • Afro-Cuban The Soul de Cuba Cafe concept is rooted in the idea of promoting and preserving Afro-Cuban culture through sharing traditional Cuban and African food and art. • 283 Crown St., New Haven, 203-498-2822 souldecuba.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Stowe's • Seafood • EP This classic seafood shack has a simple menu of fresh fish, fried New England style, plus perfect lobster rolls, all served in paper boats. • 347 Beach St., West Haven, 203-934-1991 stowesseafood.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

Thali / Thali Too • Indian • EP Each location is chic, exotic and fun, but what ultimately distinguishes them is the flavorful food. • 4 Orange St., New Haven, 203-777-1177; 65 Broadway, New Haven, 203-776-1600 thali.com. Open daily. L, D, LS (Fri.-Sat.), SB, \$\$

Tikkaway Grill • Indian • EP Build your own wrap or rice bowl by choosing your base and one of Tikkaway's signature sauces. Vegan options available. • 135 Orange St., New Haven, 203-562-1299; 2 Howe St., New Haven, 203-624-1299 tikkawaygrill.com. Open daily (Orange St.); Mon.-Fri. (Howe St.) L D, \$

Turkish Kebab House • Turkish Offers a range of Turkish fare, with seafood and vegetarian options available. • 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven, 203-933-0002 turkishkebaphouse.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$

Union League Cafe • French • EP RC Designed to capture the conviviality and old-world charm of a Parisian brasserie — less formal, more lively, unpressed but with attention to memorable food, wine and service. • 1032 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-562-4299 unionleaguecafe.com. Closed Sun. L (Mon.-Fri.), D, \$\$

Viron Rando's Osteria • Italian • EP The seasonal menu includes well-known and loved Italian classics as well as new dishes, using local, sustainable and organic ingredients. • 1721 Highland Ave., Cheshire, 203-439-2727 vironrandoosteria.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$

The Wharf • New American • EP This spot at the Madison Beach Hotel serves up panko-crusted sea bass, duck two ways and bourbon-glazed pork tenderloin — with a side of water views. • 94 West Wharf Road, Madison, 203-350-0014 madisonbeachhotel.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$, WA

Zinc • American • EP Their modern interpretation of "American Food" is local market-inspired and globally infused with a focus on sustainable food, offering a dining experience fit for even the most enthusiastic of foodies. • 964 Chapel St., New Haven, 203-624-0507 zincfood.com. Closed Sun. L (Tues.-Fri.) D, \$\$

| New London County |

Al Dente • Italian Savor the mouthwatering flavors of frutti di mare, farfalle con pollo and medaglioni de manzo, followed up with cannoli or tiramisu at this Italian dining gem. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, 800-FOXWOODS foxwoods.com. Closed Mon.-Tues. D, \$\$, E, WA

Bar Americain • American This brasserie serves up Bobby Flay specialties like lobster-avocado cocktails, buttermilk-fried chicken with biscuits — and big-time glamour. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8000 baramericain.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

The Bayou Smokehouse • Barbecue Dine-in and take-out restaurant that features the unique tastes of homemade Southern-style barbecue. Soups are made from scratch, salads are fresh to order and microwaves do not exist. • 214 CT-12, Groton, 860-440-8776 thebayousmokehouse.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$

Bleu Squid • American A bakery and cheese shop serving 30 cheeses and 40 different cupcakes. Also serves up grilled cheese sandwiches to go, freshly made and to order, including the best-selling lobster grilled cheese. • 27 Coogan Blvd., Mystic, 860-536-6343 dessertsmyctct.com. Open daily. L, \$, WA

The Captain Daniel Packer Inn • American This 1754 whaler's inn features a view of the Mystic River along with dishes like lemon pepper chicken, filet mignon and salmon. • 32 Water St., Mystic, 860-536-3555 danielpacker.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Chester's Barbecue • Barbecue • EP RC Mouthwatering, slow-cooked barbecue is the name of the game here. Choose from BBQ favorites like smoked ribs, chicken, brisket and burnt ends. • 943 Poquonock Road, Groton, 860-449-6868 chestersbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

David Burke Prime • American • EP An updated steakhouse menu with dry-aged beef, as well as terrific pork, chicken and seafood specialties. The steak served here is truly a cut above. • Foxwoods Resort Casino, Mashantucket, 860-312-8753 davidburke-prime.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Engine Room • American • EP The focus is on "beer, burgers and bourbon," within the walls of a historic refurbished marine engine building with views of the Mystic River. • 14 Holmes St., Mystic, 860-415-8117 engineeroomct.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Flanders Fish Market & Restaurant • Seafood • RC Flanders excels at lobster bisque, fish-and-chips and broiled seafood. Known for its bountiful Sunday buffet, fresh seafood market and New England clam bakes. • 22 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme, 860-739-8866 flandersfish.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana • Pizza While world-famous clam pizza is the standout, many others are also worth the wait. This expanding pizza empire continues to set the standard for Connecticut pies. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8888 pepespizzeria.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$, WA

Frank's Gourmet Grille • American In 2011, much to the dismay of local food fans, the original Frank's Gourmet Grille closed after nearly a decade in East Lyme. In 2015, the American restaurant made a triumphant return, this time in Mystic. • 56 Whitehall Ave., Mystic, 860-415-4666 franksgourmetgrilleinmystic.com. Open Tues.-Sun. L D, \$\$

Gaspar's Restaurant • New American Cuisine Enjoy award-winning lobster bisque, sushi rolls and other sea-to-table delicacies made from fresh seafood. Ambience is old-school classy with white tablecloths, red roses and candlelight. There are also excellent grass-fed beef options. • 385 Bank St., New London, 860-440-3663 gasparnewlondon.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$, WA

Harbour House Restaurant and Bar • Seafood Sample ahi tuna tacos, lobster, grilled swordfish and other seafood favorites in a casually elegant and comfortable setting with stunning water views. • 3 Williams Ave., Mystic, 860-536-8144 harbourhousect.com. Open daily. L (Mon.-Fri.) D, \$\$, E, WA

The Inishmor • Irish American Pub Get a taste of the old country at this authentic Irish pub where specialties include Gaelic favorites like chips and curry and shepherd's pie. • 20 Main St., Colchester inishmorpub.com. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E

Jasper White's Summer Shack • Seafood This award-winning restaurant features live lobster and crab, fried seafood, chowders and wood-grilled fish. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-9500 summershackrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D SB, \$\$

Kensington's at Norwich Inn • American A first-class restaurant serving gourmet food with an emphasis on natural meats, fresh, locally sourced produce and healthy preparations. • 607 West Thames St., Norwich, 860-425-3630 thespaatnorwichinn.com/kensingtons. Open daily. B L D SB, \$\$, E, WA

Kitchen Little • American Enjoy a panoramic view of the Mystic River while dining on eggs Benedict, omelets and other savory egg dishes at this breakfast destination. • 36 Quarry Road, Mystic, 860-536-2122. Open daily for breakfast. B L (Mon.-Fri.) SB, \$

Michael Jordan's Steak House • American • EP USDA prime steaks, chops and fresh seafood paired with an extensive wine list. • Mohegan Sun, Uncasville, 860-862-8600 michaeljordansteakhouse.com. Open daily. D, \$\$

Morning Glory Café • American • EP Family-owned restaurant located on the Lieutenant River in Old Lyme serves breakfast (all day on the weekends) and lunch, and features a menu with both American and Asian cuisine. • 11 Hall Road, Old Lyme, 860-434-0480. Open daily. B L, \$, WA

Octagon • American The menu at this upscale yet relaxed steakhouse includes the signature 24-ounce, bone-in rib eye, 14-ounce Kobe sirloin and wild striped bass. *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence. • Mystic Marriott Hotel, 625 North Road, Groton, 860-326-0360 octagonsteakhouse.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$, R

The Old Lyme Inn • American The Inn's restaurant and bar features a locally sourced menu with a modern twist on traditional dishes. • 85 Lyme St., Old Lyme, 860-434-2600 oldlymeinn.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Oyster Club • American • EP This popular place showcases food that travels the shortest distance from farm and sea to table, with seasonality and location determining the day's dishes. • 13 Water St., Mystic, 860-415-6266 oysterclubct.com. Closed Tues. L (Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

The Pita Spot • Middle Eastern Serving Lebanese and Mediterranean food — fresh, artfully seasoned and cooked to perfection. • 45 Williams Ave., Mystic, 860-415-4656 thepitaspot.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$

Red 36 • American • EP It's all about the sea at this waterside hotspot that offers delicious dinner with a great view. • 2 Washington St., Mystic, 860-536-3604 red36ct.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$

S&P Oyster Co. • Seafood • EP RC Serving traditional New England seafood with a South American flair. Enjoy oysters on the half shell, PEI mussels, fresh cuts of fish and Creekstone Farms steaks grilled over hardwoods. • 1 Holmes St., Mystic, 860-536-2674 sp-oyster.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

| Tolland County |

Bidwell Tavern & Cafe • American • EP This 1822 Coventry tavern, once the town hall, offers prime rib, chicken wings and 24 beers on tap. • 1260 Main St. (Route 31), Coventry, 860-742-6978. Open daily. L D LS, \$\$, E, WA

The Blue Oak at the Nathan Hale Inn • American On the UConn campus, enjoy honest New England-style dishes and lighter fare. Great wine selection. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 nathanhaleinn.com. Open daily. B L D, \$\$

Georgina's Italian Restaurant • Italian Warm and inviting — try the calamari appetizer, chicken Athena, lasagna and chicken parmigiano. • 275 Boston Tpke., Bolton, 860-647-0345 georginasrestaurant.com. Closed Mon. L D, \$\$, WA

Lake View • Fresh Seafood / Italian • EP Fresh seafood, Italian dishes, paninis, salads, burgers and wings are served in a casual, romantic waterside setting. • 50 Lake St., Coventry, 860-498-0500 coventrylakeview.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, E, WA

Little Mark's Big BBQ • Barbecue Little Mark's famous homemade sauces, such as Kansas City Sweet, Pork Pickin' Vinegar and Texas Hot, enhance the beef and pork ribs. • 226 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-872-1410 littlemarksbbq.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Pancho Loco • Mexican Don your shorts and Hawaiian shirt and try this Parrothead paradise for sizzling fajitas and chillin' margaritas. • 218 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-871-1819 pancholoco.net. Open daily. L D, \$, E, WA

Rein's New York Style Deli-Restaurant • American • EP Bright and bustling Jewish deli serving everything from challah French toast and potato pancakes to pastrami reubens and cheese blintzes. • 435 Hartford Tpke., Vernon, 860-875-1344 reinsdeli.com. Open daily. B L D LS SB, \$, WA

True Blue Tavern at the Nathan Hale Inn • American Great casual dining in a fun atmosphere celebrating the spirit of UConn athletics. • 855 Bolton Road, Storrs, 860-427-7888 nathanhaleinn.com. Open daily. D, \$, WA

Utsav Indian Cuisine • Indian • EP This gem boasts a menu of delectable Indian treats such as shham savera or calamari cochin. • 575 Talcottville Road, Vernon, 860-871-8714 utsavcuisine.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$, WA

Willington Pizza House • Pizza Unusual designer pizza concoctions, including red-potato and seafood casino. • 25 River Road (Route 32), Willington, 860-429-7433 willingtonpizza.com. Open daily. B L D LS, \$, WA

| Windham County |

Bella's Bistro • Northern Italian An upscale spot with a seasonal menu serving veal, beef, chicken, pork, pizzas and more. • 75 Main St., Putnam, 860-928-7343 bellasbistromarket.com. Closed Mon. L D (Tues.-Sat.), \$\$, WA

Coriander Cafe • American • RC Offers breakfast, lunch and dinner with a focus on local and seasonal homestyle cooking, plus a specials menu that changes daily. • 192 Eastford Road, Eastford, 860-315-7691 coriandercafeeastford.com. Open daily. B L D (Tues.-Sat.), \$

The Courthouse Bar & Grille • American Serves 20 great appetizers, plus "arresting" main courses such as seafood Alfredo and Montreal sirloin. • 121 Main St., Putnam, 860-963-0074 courthousebarandgrille.com. Open daily. L D LS (weekends), \$, WA

Golden Lamb Buttery • American • EP In a barn overlooking a 1,000-acre farm, dinner here might be roast duckling, chateaubriand or honey-glazed rack of lamb. • 199 Bush Hill Road, Brooklyn, 860-774-4423 thegoldenlamb.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. L D (Fri.-Sat.), \$\$, E, WA

Hank's Restaurant • American A family place serving home-style chowders, lobster salad rolls and prime rib. • 416 Providence Road, Brooklyn, 860-774-6071 hanksrestaurant.com. Open daily. L D, \$\$

The Heirloom Food Company • Vegan • EP RC Organic cafe & juice bar offering locally sourced, organic ingredients. • 630 N. Main Street, Danielson, 860-779-3373 eathierloomfood.com. Closed Sun.-Mon. B L, \$

The Inn at Woodstock Hill • American The menu at this historic estate includes shrimp-and-sea-scallop stir-fry and duckling à l'orange. • 94 Plaine Hill Road, Woodstock, 860-928-0528 woodstockhill.com. Open daily. L (Thurs.-Sat.) D SB, \$\$, WA

The Mansion at Bald Hill • American The pan-seared diver scallops with jumbo shrimp is tops, and don't skip the lobster mac 'n' cheese. • 29 Plaine Road, South Woodstock, 860-974-3456 mansionatbaldhill.com. Closed Mon. D, \$\$, WA

Mozzarella's Grill & Bar • American / Italian Great family restaurant with a warm, cozy atmosphere serving fresh burgers, steaks, seafood, and Italian specialties. • 460 Hartford Tpke., Dayville, 860-774-3434 mozzarellasgrill.com. Closed Fri.-Sun. B L D, \$, E, WA

The Vanilla Bean Café • American Known for its homemade soups, award-winning chili, vegetarian dishes and desserts. • 450 Deerfield Road (Rtes. 44, 169 & 97), Pomfret, 860-928-1562 thevanillabeancafe.com. Open daily. B L D (Wed.-Sun.), \$\$, E, WA

Willimantic Brewing Co. / Main Street Café • Brew Pub • EP This pioneering brewery is located within a historic U.S. Post Office building. Beers are brewed in full view of diners. Try the ale-steamed mussels. Other Connecticut craft beers available. • 967 Main St., Willimantic, 860-423-6777 willibrew.com. Open daily. L (Tues.-Sun.) D, \$\$, WA



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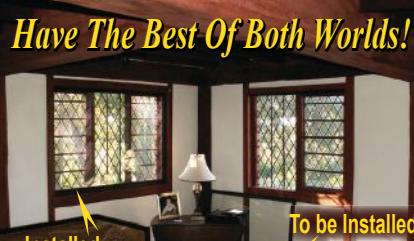


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Dog of War

MEET STUBBY, THE CONNECTICUT STRAY WHO SERVED HEROICALLY ON THE BATTLEFIELDS OF WWI

BY ERIK OFGANG

His was the bark heard round the world.

In 1917, a century ago this spring, a stray dog with brown and white fur and a thick snout wandered onto the New Haven fields near today's Yale Bowl, where the 102nd Infantry of the U.S. Army's 26th Yankee Division camped and trained. Pvt. J. Robert Conroy, a 25-year-old New Britain man, adopted the dog and named him Stubby. The dog went on to serve in the trenches of France during World War I, where he would bark, salute, charm and earn his way into history for a number of heroics that seem ripped from a movie.

During his "service," Stubby learned how to give members of the Yankee Division advance notice of gas attacks. He searched for wounded soldiers between the trenches in "no man's land," where he was able to discern enemy from allied fallen, caught a German soldier who had snuck over to the Allied side, and was even wounded in the conflict but survived to bark another day, meeting three U.S. presidents after the war.

Ann Bausum, author of two books about Stubby, *Sergeant Stubby* (for adults) and *Stubby The War Dog* (for children), first came across the legendary Connecticut canine by accident. Bausum, who lives in southern Wisconsin, and is "not a dog person," says she was doing photo research for another project when she saw an image of Stubby online.

Slowly, the stout dog with wide, dark eyes began to charm Bausum like he had so many U.S. soldiers, but she had her doubts about his wartime record.

"Frankly, the material presented on the internet was so fanciful, I couldn't believe it was true," she says.

As she dug into Stubby's history with a healthy dose of skepticism, she found some misconceptions. For instance, he never received the rank of "sergeant," as is frequently stated on the internet. But to her surprise, the heart of Stubby's tale was true, including its most fantastic elements.

After wandering into camp in New Haven, Stubby, whose heritage is uncertain but may have been most closely related to Boston terriers, became the division's mascot. He marched with the soldiers and

even learned to salute high-ranking officers by raising his paw to his forehead.

When the Yankee Division was deployed to France, Conroy smuggled Stubby along with him.

Overseas, Stubby developed his ability to give advance warning of gas attacks, but exactly how he did this is unclear. "My guess is given the

acuity of a dog's hearing, the sound of a gas shell being loaded for launching was different than the sound of an artillery shell and the dog learned to decipher the distinction between that," Bausum says. "Then, of course, the sense of smell, as well. There could have been smells associated with it, and it's been well documented that dogs have a sense of smell that's not only very keen, but covers a wide area."

Stubby's warning would give the men of the Yankee Division extra time to strap on their gas masks and evacuate underground rooms in the bunkers, where gas tended to linger. (To protect Stubby, Conroy also had a gas mask made specially for the dog.)

During one gas attack, a sergeant in the division, John J. Curtin, was sleeping below ground in a dugout, and didn't hear the alarm outside. Stubby woke him, saving him. Curtin composed a poem in tribute to his furry savior. "Listen to me and I will tell of a dog who went all through hell," goes Curtin's poem, "He always knew when to duck the shells / And buried his nose at the first gas smells."

According to Conroy, Stubby also saved the French village of Château-Thierry from a gas attack, a feat Bausum says would explain why Stubby received his famous "army" coat from the women of the town, which he'd often wear in his later public appearances. The coat was adorned with a host of medals many say Stubby earned during the conflict. Bausum believes most of the medals on the coat were won by Conroy, not Stubby, but that the dog did earn one of the most famous medals for capturing a German soldier, a story Bausum at first thought was made up.

"I was like, 'Yeah right, he captured a German spy?'" she says. "The truth is he captured somebody, whether he is a spy or whether he is just lost is not in the record. As best I can tell it happened in the fall of 1918, probably September, during a particularly aggressive military assault when the



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Americans were capturing a lot of territory and the Germans were in somewhat disarray. So, it could have easily been a deserter or it could have been a spy. Who knows?"

What is not disputed is that when Stubby recognized a German soldier in Allied territory, he started barking. When the soldier ran, Stubby knocked him down and held onto him by the seat of his pants until U.S. soldiers

arrived. Stubby likely received the soldier's German Iron Cross, as it was practice in those days for a soldier to claim the medals of enemies captured.

After the war, Stubby was a celebrity. He appeared at parades, including a homecoming parade in Conroy's native New Britain, and was profiled in hundreds of newspaper stories. Conroy and Stubby moved to Washington, D.C., where Stubby became the mascot of the Georgetown University football team and became a star of the halftime show (he would chase a football around the field, nudge it with his head when he caught up to it, and then — to the delight of fans — chase it some more). Conroy served a brief stint in the FBI, among other jobs, but always made time to serve as Stubby's unofficial PR person.

When Stubby died in 1926, while cradled in Conroy's arm, Conroy preserved his remains by having him stuffed. Today, Stubby's remains are part of *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War* exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington. Closer to home, his memory is honored each year when Connecticut's First Company Governor's Foot Guard awards the Stubby Award for Canine Heroism at its annual dog show. Conroy's grandson, Curt Deane, who is in his late 60s, hopes to have a statue of the dog erected in Hartford. The animated film *Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero* is slated for release next April.

Deane, who lives in Lyme, says his grandfather loved recounting tales of Stubby. "It was one of his central talking points; he worshipped the dog," he says.

Conroy died in 1987 at the age of 95. In all the decades after Stubby's death, Conroy never owned another dog. Deane says his grandfather told him this was because "he and Stubby went through so much together and that Stubby was so loyal and comforting that he never believed another dog could take his place."



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